

The Atlantic

MARTIN AMIS ON PHILIP ROTH / JAMES FALLOWS IN MALAYSIA

Heterosexuals and AIDS

The second stage of the epidemic

By Katie Leishman



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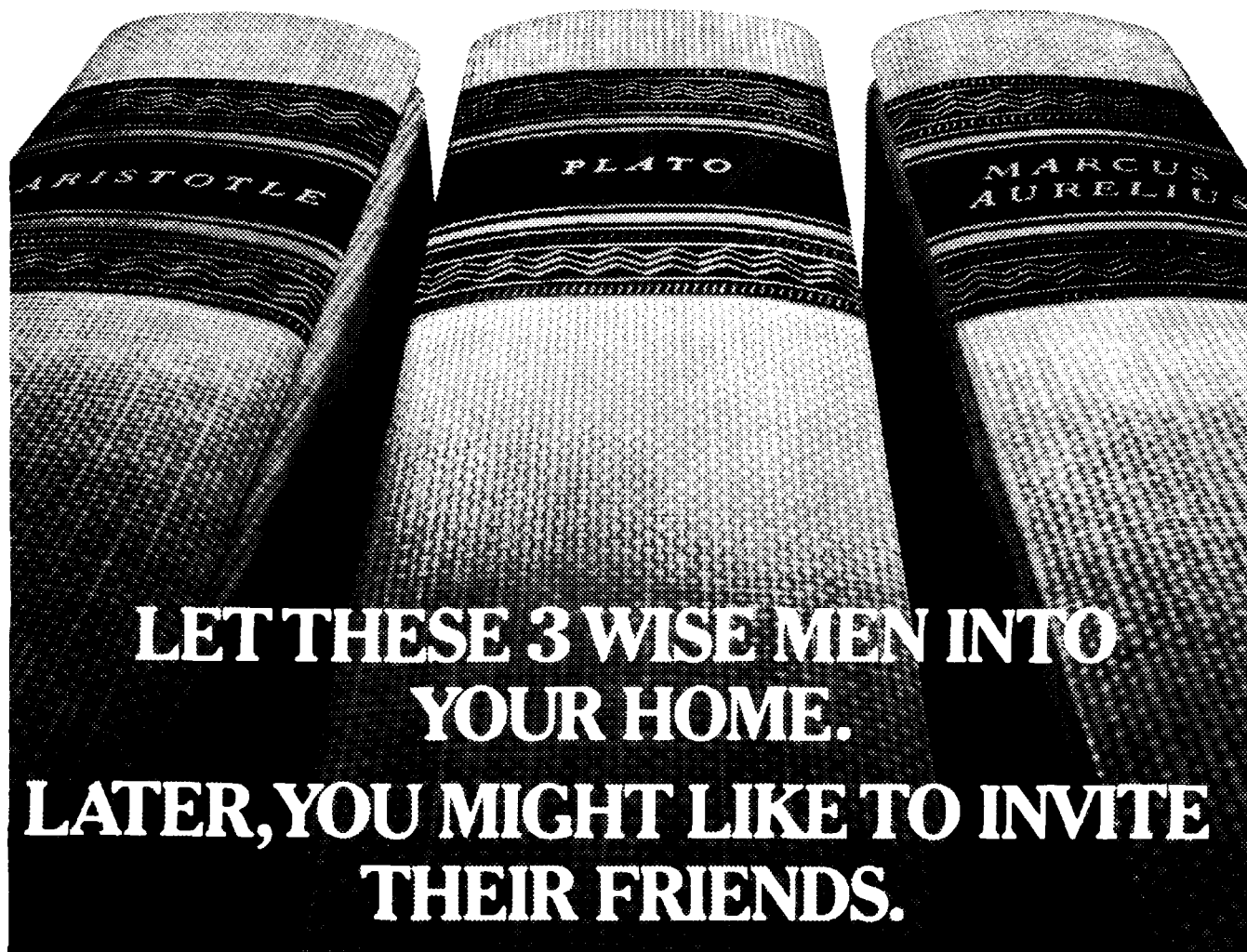
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An investigation into life-styles. Every month yields new revelations from the behavioral research related to AIDS. Despite a growing risk of infection, heterosexuals have been reluctant to modify their sexual behavior.
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Clarence Thomas, a black, and the chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, does not believe in integration, affirmative action, or the possibility of a colorblind society. His job, he believes, is to protect individuals, not groups.

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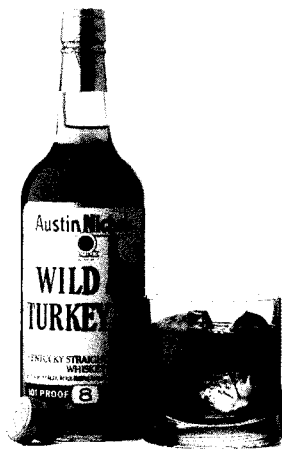
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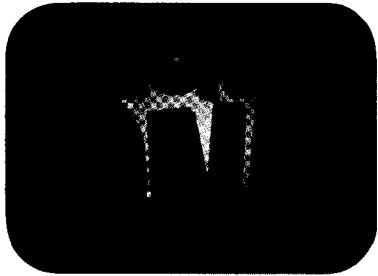
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The February Almanac was compiled with the assistance of Gail Cleere and the staff of the U.S. Naval Observatory; the A. C. Nielsen Company; the National Cherry Growers Association; the American Heart Association; the London of the Marriage and Divorce Statistics Branch of the National Center for Health Statistics; Thomas Exter, senior editor of *American Demography*; the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences; the Coalition on Smoking or Health; and the Philatelic Affairs Department of the U.S. Postal Service.

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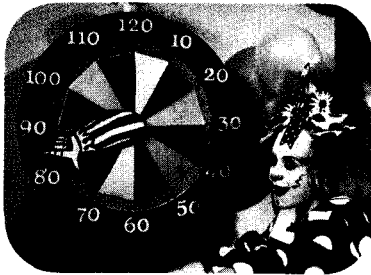
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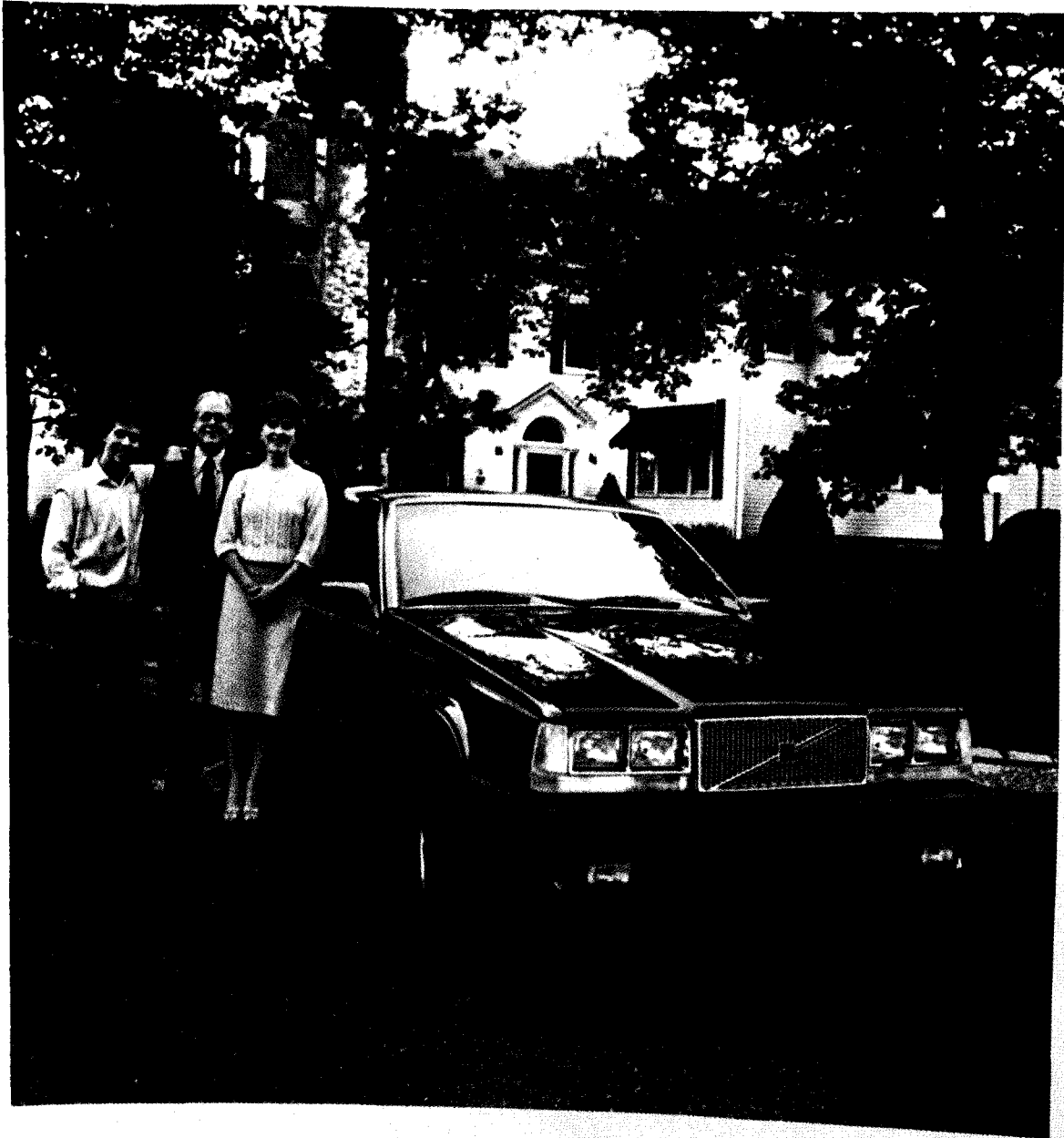
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HISTORICAL JESUS

Thanks to Cullen Murphy for "Who Do Men Say That I Am?" (December *Atlantic*). I found it a witty and responsibly written exploration of modern christological perspectives. Like the physicist's electron, whose identity oscillates between particle and wave, the Second Person of the Trinity can be pinned down to neither "the Jesus of history" nor "the Christ of faith" without diminishing His dynamic integrity. The strength of "Christology from below" rests precisely in such acknowledgments of human limitation. By offering glimpses of the humanness of theological inquiry, Murphy reminds us that the crucial question belongs not to Pilate ("What is truth?") but to the disturbed, disturbing Galilean who sought authentic responses, not irrefutable solutions. One cannot help but think of Schweitzer, whose *Quest for the Historical Jesus*, for all its brilliance, left him frustrated enough to search for a more authentic expression of his commitment. The musical ending to Murphy's piece brings to mind a theology professor's aphorism: "Creeds, after all, are not meant to be signed . . . but sung!"

STEVE LAUE

Pastor, Trinity-White Oak
The United Methodist Church
Royal Center, Ind.

I am elated and deeply impressed by Cullen Murphy's "Who Do Men Say That I Am?" This interpretation of Jesus "from below" strikes me as more glorious than the offal that the "know-nothings" are deluging us with "from above"!

JUDSON TOWNLEY

Minister, Murray Presbyterian Church
Murray, Nebr.

I disagree with the statement that Jesus declined to enlighten his followers as to who he was.

He asked, "But who do you say that I am?" When Peter declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," Jesus responded, "Blessed art thou . . . because flesh and blood has not revealed this unto thee but my Father which is in Heaven." His answer is very significant. True believers are going to be convinced

not by biblical scholarship nor by the testimony of other true believers but rather because their hearts will be touched—they will receive revelation from on High.

BEN JONI

Salt Lake City, Utah

Is interpreting Jesus in the modern world best done by countless hours spent trying to reconstruct a "historical Jesus" or by helping to alleviate the pain, the hunger, the thirst, and the imprisonment of people who live in the modern world? Jesus said, "Inasmuch as you have done it to these, you have done it to Me."

MARY F. PEELE

Birmingham, Ala.

Biblical scholarship, as Cullen Murphy made clear in his excellent comprehensive article, has swept away much of the doctrinal foundation of traditional Christianity, especially of the more conservative sort. It bears out Bernard Shaw's view that Christianity, the main, has been not the religion of Jesus but a religion *about* him.

What remains is an outline of Jesus' ethical insights, which, when combined with modern secular knowledge, scientific method, and reason, can produce an inclusive life stance (probably a better word than *religion* or *faith*) ideal for humankind today and tomorrow. Such life stance is already here in contemporary humanism, to a very large extent Unitarian Universalism and much of Judaism, and among a great many Christians of various denominations.

EDD DOE

Silver Spring, Md.

THE WESTERN FRONT

I was terribly moved by Jack Beatty's "Along the Western Front" (November *Atlantic*). I was not yet born when the division fought in the Ypres sector, 1918, but I was old enough to be caught up in the fires of the Second World War and to put in ten months of brutal combat in the mountains of Italy with the 91st Infantry Division.

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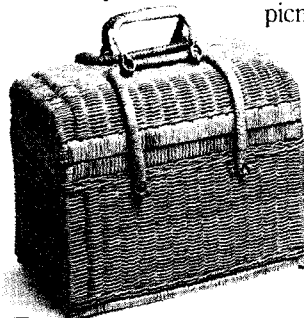
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memorials along the Western Front. I have mine in the American cemetery at Florence, Italy. My brother will soon have his memorial from his days in Korea, and the veterans of the insanity in Vietnam have theirs in their sad wall.

Beatty asks: "Why did they do it? Why did all those young men go to the deaths so easily? That's a question I've pondered for over forty years.

ROY LIVENGOW
Salina, Kan

As a Second World War veteran with battle experience, I object to the following in Jack Beatty's otherwise excellent article about visiting the Western Front: "The method that finally broke the trench barrier was, of course, the armored tank."

What broke the stalemate was the German infantry, using sophisticated tactics (copied by all armies), without any help at all from tanks. The stalemate was caused by the idea that artillery conquers and infantry occupies, and it was broken by the idea that thrusting is better than pushing. Reserves and supporting fires were thrown in to exploit success, not to redeem failure, with little regard for flanks and alignment. This method (dispensing with full-scale artillery preparations) also contributed to the element of surprise. As for the primitive tanks of the time, they were mere experiment, achieving little, although their potential was understood particularly by the Germans.

A public misconception about tanks—that these now fantastically expensive machines (hardly used in our last two major wars) can replace manpower and provide an easy victory—could have fatal consequences. Wars are fought by men, not by gadgets; nothing replaces infantry.

WILLIS C. ROWE
Gaithersburg, Md

Jack Beatty replies:

Mr. Rowe is right about the method by which the Germans broke through the Allied trench barrier in the spring of 1918. However, in the passage he cites referring to the method by which the Allies, in their counterattack the summer and fall, made the strategic breakthrough of the war—through the German trench barrier. Attacking east of Amiens on August 8, 1918, the British sent 420 tanks, plus 120 supply tanks against the German defenses. The mechanized onslaught achieved a spe

acular success, one memorialized by Ludendorff's lapidary admission, "August 8th was the black day for the German Army in this war." Of the wider significance of that day one historian of the period writes: "The import of the Allied supply of tanks was brought home to Ludendorff]. Convinced that no strategic maneuver could save Germany from defeat, he realized that the war must be ended and so informed the Kaiser."

FALLOWS ON JAPAN

James Fallows ("The Japanese Are Different From You and Me," September *Atlantic*) says that the tip system is unknown in Japan. Well, one can tip a taxi driver in Japan, or a geisha, or a *waitress* (waitress) of a *ryokan* (traditional Japanese inn).

Fallows criticizes the Japanese for not wanting Koreans and other immigrants to become Japanese citizenship. Japan lacks almost all natural resources, one of which is land; only a third of the small nation is suitable for living. If Japan did not make it difficult to acquire citizenship, immigrants would pour in from the neighboring less-developed countries. The result could be catastrophic overcrowding. Fallows himself agrees that Japan is already overcrowded.

GEORGE GIVENS
Tucson, Ariz.

I have only one question for James Fallows: Couldn't the homogeneity of the Japanese population help explain the shared values of diligence, sacrifice, and teamwork which Fallows credits for Japan's high level of productivity?

NINA JAFFE GRUEN
El Cerrito, Calif.

As a white middle-class graduate student, I've always been afraid I was a bit colorless. Then I read James Fallows's article and found that according to the Japanese, guys like me have "a sense of style and rhythm, artistic talent and energy, and raw animal (and supposedly sexual) strength." Frankly, I'm thrilled.

JACK HERRON
Tangent, Ore.

James Fallows replies:

Yes, you should tip in ryokans. About geishas, I couldn't say. But these are rare exceptions, which strengthen my main point. I have never tipped a taxi driver

in Japan and have never felt that a tip was expected or even hoped for. Only once, on my very first day, did I try to tip a hotel porter. This one was struggling to carry all my family's luggage in one load. His startled look as he waved me off deterred me from trying again. Moreover, the stiff service charge tacked onto most bills eliminated any guilt I might have felt about not tipping.

No one is proposing that little, crowded Japan open itself to hordes of refugees, but my point was about the racial outlook behind its anti-immigrant policy. The "Koreans" living in Japan, after all, did not exactly fight their way into the country. Their parents or grandparents were brought there, unwilling, to perform forced labor when the Japanese ruled Korea (and apparently were not so worried about overcrowding the home islands). They are still known as Koreans because Japan will not, except in rare cases, let them become citizens. Even though they were born and raised in Japan, usually speak Japanese fluently, and often look like other Japanese, they are considered racially different, and therefore permanently un-Japanese. American history holds a parallel case: one group of people were imported against their will to perform slave labor, and their descendants were denied full rights on purely racial grounds. But since at least the time of the Civil War many Americans have been embarrassed about this pattern of discrimination, and for the past twenty-five years this country has tried hard to correct it. I detected little embarrassment about the exclusion of Koreans in Japan.

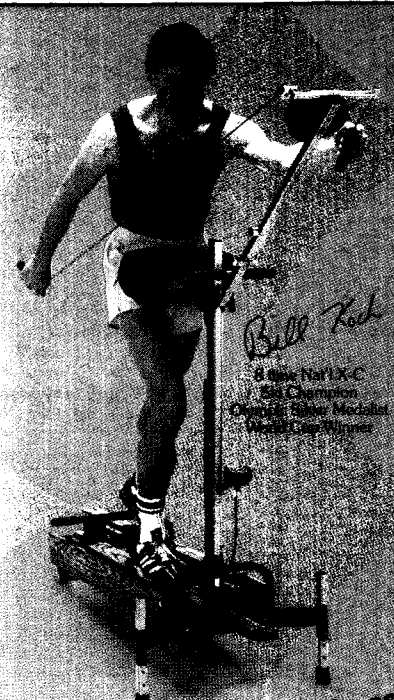
To Nina Jaffe Gruen: Yes, and I was trying to say as much. To Jack Herron: Me too.

TYMPANI PROBLEMS

William Youngren has slipped into further trouble in his attempt to rebut David Urrows's correct assertion that *tympni* is a misspelling of *timpani* (Letters to the Editor, October *Atlantic*).

To begin with, Youngren ought to know that most English dictionaries are descriptive, not prescriptive. You can find *irregardless* listed, and *disinterested* defined as synonymous with *uninterested*, but neither is acceptable usage.

Invoking the poet Robert Browning's 1875 use of *tympanies* carries no weight. Browning in this instance was in fact translating Euripides' play *Herakles*, and



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ancient Greece did not have kettledrums. The word *tympanies* does exist—as the plural of *tympany*, which is not a musical instrument but a medical symptom, and has its own etymological descent. Browning was simply using the wrong plural.

Having quite properly consulted the mammoth *Oxford English Dictionary*, Youngren claims that *tympan/timpan*, in use from the ninth century on, was the actual Anglo-Saxon term for kettledrum. But this word came from the Irish *tiompan*, and designated not a drum but a stringed instrument. Kettledrums did not make their way to Western Europe until the later Crusades (twelfth and thirteenth centuries), and even these were tiny drums, called *nakers*, such as could be hung in pairs from the waist. The large kettledrums, which eventually made their way into the seventeenth-century orchestra, did not arrive in Europe until 1457.

Youngren failed to look at the final volume of the *OED Supplement* (just issued last year), where the question of *timpani* and its provenance is put aright. And had he checked music reference works, he would have found several that go out of their way to keep the reader from error: the *Oxford Companion to Music* and Jacobs's *New Dictionary of Music* both give "*timpani* (*not tympani*)," and the *Harvard Dictionary of Music* cautions, "In modern writings *tympani* occurs as a misspelling of *timpani*."

It all boils down to this: as with so many musical terms, *timpani* came into English directly from Italian, and there is no *y* in the Italian alphabet. It is what linguists call a loan word, and is usually employed in the plural—like *confetti*, *spaghetti*, and *graffiti*. Even if one thought one were dealing with Latin, *tympani* would still be wrong, since the Latin word (like its Greek source) is neuter and the plural is thus *tympana*.

CALDWELL TITCOMB
Professor of Music
Brandeis University
Waltham, Mass.

William Youngren replies:

Professor Titcomb's letter contains so many errors that I will perhaps seem tediously pedantic if I attempt to correct them all. But since he took the trouble to write, I feel that I owe him a response.

The Anglo-Saxon (and Middle English) word *tympan/timpan*, he tells us, "came from the Irish *tiompan*, and designated not a drum but a stringed instru-

ment." But the *OED*, in addition to stating that the word meant "a drum or similar instrument," cites passages in which a *tympan* is something that you "beat" or "smite." Moreover, the English word is not derived from the Irish one. Both are derived from the Latin *tympanum*, meaning "drum," and "drum" is the first meaning listed for the Irish word in the Royal Irish Academy's *Dictionary of the Irish Language*.

The fact that when Browning used *tympanies* he was translating Euripides is irrelevant, as is the fact that the ancient Greeks did not have kettledrums. They had drums, and it is drums that Euripides is referring to when he uses the genitive plural *τυμπάνων* at *Herakles* line 891. The English word *tympany*, like the earlier *tympan*, did indeed mean a drum—as well as a swelling or tumor. In fact, the latter, medical sense was derived by metaphorical extension from the original, musical one: such symptoms were seen as swelling the body up like a drum. Thus the medical term does not have "its own etymological descent." And what can Professor Titcomb possibly mean when he says that "Browning was simply using the wrong plural"? The only conceivable plural for *tympany* is *tympanies*.

Professor Titcomb chides me for having "failed to look at the final volume of the *OED Supplement*," in which "the question of *timpani* and its provenance is put aright." I suppose he is referring to the fact that the *OED Supplement* says that *timpani* is the plural of the Italian *timpano*. But this is scarcely news: we can find the same information in any recent dictionary.

What Professor Titcomb does not tell us is that the Supplement, like the *OED* itself, lists *tympani* and *tympanist* as acceptable current variants of *timpani* and *timpanist*. In fact I did consult the Supplement; the only reason I didn't mention it in my reply to Mr. Urrows was that it merely added further corroboration to what I felt I had already demonstrated sufficiently.

And it's no good simply dismissing the testimony of dictionaries of English (as opposed to music dictionaries) on the ground that most of the former are merely descriptive rather than prescriptive. The prescriptive *American Heritage*, for example, accepts *tympani* and *tympanist* but rejects *irregardless* and *disinterested* (in the sense of *uninterested*) as "substandard" and "nonstandard," respectively.

As Professor Titcomb surely must

know, English spelling is not altogether rational. The modern English word *tympani*, as I thought I had made clear in my reply to Mr. Urrows, is one of the many mixed-up words in our language. While its final *i* points to the fact that it owes its present plural use to the influence of the Italian *timpani*, its medial *y* is a hangover from the older *tympany*, now used only in its medical sense. It is because dictionaries of English, whether the "mammoth" *OED* or the more modest *American Heritage*, take into account that the spellings of our words often reflect the histories that they are better guides in these matters than more specialized (and shortsighted) music dictionaries.

WIN SOME, LOSE SOME

The short story "Night Sport," by William Hoffman (October *Atlantic*), is one of the most dangerous stories I have ever read. Hoffman's message is deadly, cancerous, ugly. His last paragraph will trouble me for many years to come.

NANCY A. CASSELL
Bloomington, Ind.

I subscribe to your magazine because I look to be entertained, informed, and made to think. The short story "Night Sport" did not do any of the above. It is the type of story that lurks in a depraved, unsettled mind.

I'll not continue my subscription.

J. A. GRIM
Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

I have been meaning for months to write and tell you how much I enjoy your fiction. The short stories are worth the price of the subscription by themselves. Sue Miller's "Quality of Life" (November *Atlantic*) is the story that spurred me to finally put pen to paper. Spare, perceptive, exciting—there is a dead sentence in that story.

JANE KNIGHT
Asheville, N.C.

ADVICE & CONSENT

Nicholas Lemann's recent article on British politics ("England, Where England?" November *Atlantic*) contains a factual error that leads to a misunderstanding about Neil Kinnock. The 1991 trip that he made to Washington, D.C., was after he became leader of the Labor

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Party, was his third to America, not his first. As a young member of Parliament, he had come on a U.S.-government-sponsored tour, and in 1976 he appeared in four midwestern states on a television program produced by our local public-television station. The show was called "Congress and Parliament—How Well Do They Serve?" I moderated the discussion, and John Brademas, who was then the congressman from Indiana's Third District, represented the congressional perspective.

When Kinnock came to America in 1983, he no doubt loved "it," but there was certainly no love lost between him and the Reagan Administration officials who were his hosts. Based on my letters and conversations with Kinnock over the past decade, I know he is well aware that there is more to America than ghettos. The current Administration's unwillingness to better the lot of the poor is, however, a source of anger and irritation. Table pounding was most likely only the visible sign of a deep dismay.

Lemann implies that Neil Kinnock is a provincial anti-American leftist. On the contrary, Kinnock focuses on poli-

cies and not nationality: when he visited the Soviet Union some years ago, he gave one of his Russian guides a hard time about the fact that Trotsky has been written out of Soviet history; Welsh nationalism appalls him because it hurts the people. He may not be a member of the Oxbridge set that has dominated Britain's political parties, but he has a much more sophisticated view of the world beyond Land's End than Lemann indicates.

ROY E. SCHREIBER
Professor of History
Indiana University
South Bend, Ind.

I am a product of schooling remarkably similar to that described by Katie Leishman in her review of Alan Peshkin's book *God's Choice: The Total World of a Fundamentalist Christian School* ("Reading, Writing, and Religion," November *Atlantic*), and I was surprised to read at the end of the article that the pedagogical approach taken by Bethany is so "new" that only a speculative forecast of its impact on students is possible.

Christian fundamentalists have no

monopoly on an educational philosophy that "would take a heart over a mind any day." Such schools are common in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic history and have produced some of the world's finest scientists, artists, and intellectuals.

My education took place at a small overseas school for missionaries' children. Our class produced at least two medical doctors, three registered nurses, an artist, a carpenter, a maintenance man, a lawyer, a housewife, an aircraft technician, and an epidemiologist. So far as I know, only one returned to church-related work; the remainder work in the secular world with varying degrees of commitment to the church that raised and educated them.

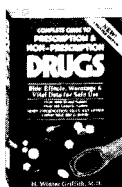
I would suggest that Peshkin's grin prognosis, rather than being merely speculative, ignores a large pool of people who have passed through similar schools, who are available to study, and who, on the surface at least, suggest that his prognosis is simply wrong. I am surprised that Leishman also ignored this fact in reviewing the book.

DAVID F. ADDLETON
Morristown, Tenn

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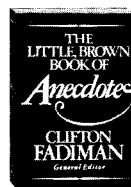
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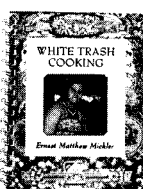
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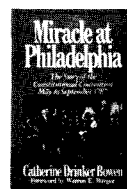
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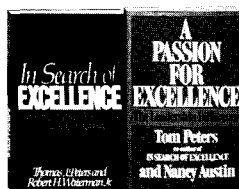
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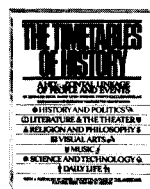
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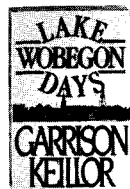
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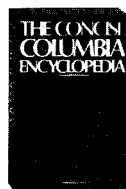
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As a parent who watches what her children watch and watches her children watch, I can tell you that David Owen's theory that parents control television-watching ("Where Toys Come From," November *Atlantic*) is plain bunk. What children watch depends on what's available for them to choose from. National Geographic specials on three major networks at nine o'clock on Saturday morning would put an end to Rambo, Strawberry Shortcake, Popples, and the rest.

C. WELKER
Imperial, Mo.

In closing her argument that peer review in the medical profession should ordinarily be protected from antitrust regulations ("The Law: Trust Versus Antitrust," September *Atlantic*), Katrin Snow quotes Arnold Relman's rhetorical question regarding whether medical ethics are to be "the ethics of professionalism or the rules of the marketplace." The application of Relman's point to these cases fails on two counts and thereby weakens her otherwise compelling article.

First and foremost, marketplace rules as embodied in antitrust law presume choices and information that are infrequently available to consumers of medical services. Thus medical practice is characterized by imperfect or monopolistic competition. The decision in *Patrick v. Burget* may have been bad law insofar as it turned on a per se interpretation of referral practices. It does not necessarily follow, however, that all referral and disciplinary decisions should be protected, particularly where the intent or principal effect of those decisions includes unreasonably high fees for medical care or a significantly restricted choice of providers. There is a social and, therefore, state concern at least as compelling as in most other economic sectors that medical services be delivered and priced both efficiently and effectively. The task is to ensure that regulations and judicial decisions in cases like *Patrick* are based on a *rule of reason* that includes intent and effect such that neither incompetence nor fee-rigging is permitted.

A second concern is the impression given that business practice outside "the

professions" protects incompetence, unsafe products, and so forth. This is inaccurate in most cases. In fact, the extent to which these "market failures" occur may be no greater outside medicine. Competition, enlightened management, voluntary self-regulation at the industry level, and a vast array of local, state, and federal regulations govern business practice and prompt ethics that are typically as "professional" as or even more so than those observed among many physicians.

The impact of bad medicine on life and health may warrant special consideration in how antitrust regulations are applied. But the medical profession might learn more from studying contemporary business ethics and environments than from relying on hoary, pejorative, and atypical stereotypes. Those who resist economic regulation in medicine via the antitrust approach may be even less happy with its most likely alternative—state control.

THOMAS A. KLEIN
College of Business Administration
The University of Toledo
Toledo, Ohio

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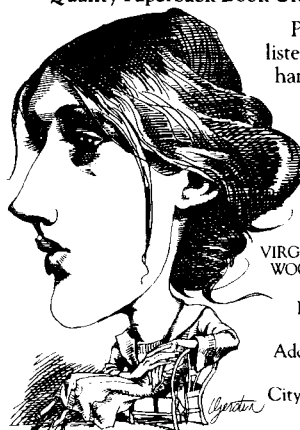
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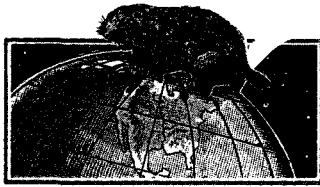
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THE SKIES

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FOOD

February is National Cherry Month, and yet nary a fresh American cherry is to be had. A few imported fresh cherries—a quantity on the order of one cherry for every 10 people in the United States—are available, but they're beside the point of the observance. The point, of course, is George Washington's birthday, and a tie-in to the apocryphal cherry-tree story. And what is the suggested form of observance for National Cherry Month? Robert Cain, the secretary of the National Cherry Growers and Industries Foundation, says: "Buy some canned or frozen or maraschino cherries and use them in pies or cakes or toppings."



NEW STAMPS

February 12, a 14-cent stamp honoring Julia Ward Howe, the author of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," to be issued in Watertown, Massachusetts. 20, a 22-cent stamp featuring Jean Baptiste Point DuSable, to be issued in the city he founded, Chicago, Illinois. 27, the 10th stamp in the Performing Arts Series, honoring Enrico Caruso, to be issued in New York City. 28, a 2-cent stamp honoring Mary Lyon, the founder of Mount Holyoke College, to be issued in South Hadley, Massachusetts.



DEMOGRAPHICS

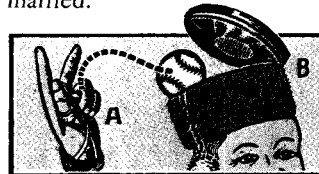
Thanks to leap year and the merely quadrennial occurrence of a February 29, more people in the United States celebrate their birthday on February 28 (about 832,000) than on any other day of the year (about 665,500). But fewer people are born in February than in any other month, and February's share of total annual births is actually declining (from 7.82 percent in 1984 to 7.47 percent in 1985). The decrease may be due in part to the increasing number of Caesarean sections, which are usually scheduled for weekdays. February almost always contains only 20 weekdays, whereas other months generally contain 21 to 23.

GOVERNMENT

Early this month both the House and the Senate will recess for about a week. February 27, as a result of the Comprehensive Smokeless Tobacco Health Education Act of 1986, all packages of smokeless tobacco must now carry one of three health warnings: "This product may cause mouth cancer," "This product may cause gum disease and tooth loss," or "This product is not a safe alternative to cigarettes."

HEALTH & SAFETY

In part owing to Valentine's Day, February is American Heart Month. There are medical, as well as sentimental, ties. Married people who have just suffered heart attacks are more likely than are single, widowed, or divorced people to survive their hospital stays and then to live for at least 3 years after discharge, according to one recent study. Another study controlled cohorts of married and non-married people for all the familiar heart-disease risk factors, such as smoking, cholesterol, blood pressure, obesity, and age; it concluded that the non-married men were at double the married men's risk for death from heart disease relating to ischemia, or narrowing of the arteries. However, the opposite was true for women. Also on the other side of the coin is the finding, in a study of people's subjective perceptions of their health, that people age 65 and over are most likely to describe their health as excellent or good (instead of fair or poor) if they have never been married.

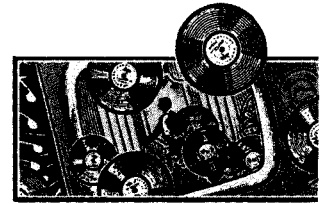


EXPIRING PATENTS

No. 3,492,688. Apparatus for tenderizing food. "An article of food is tenderized by placing it in water and detonating an explosive charge in the vicinity thereof."

No. 3,497,218. Baseball pitching aid. "A device for teaching . . . the user to hold his hand in a given manner so that when he pitches a ball, rotational characteristics will be imparted thereto causing the ball to deviate from a straight line and thus produce a 'curve ball.'"

No. 3,496,575. Carry-all hat. "A hat adapted to be worn by female users provided with means for removably storing items for use by the wearer or others."



ARTS & LETTERS

The peak TV-watching season concludes this month: during February the 243 million people in the United States with access to television sets—9 percent of all American households—watch 7.6 billion hours of TV per week, whereas they watch 6.6 billion hours in summer week. For the average person this means 31 hours week in February, or nearly four and a half hours a day. February 24, the 29th annual Grammy Awards, presented for creative excellence in the recording industry. The 6 awards categories fall into 1 areas ranging from classical art rock music to comedy, polk gospel, reggae, music video and the spoken word.

125 YEARS AGO

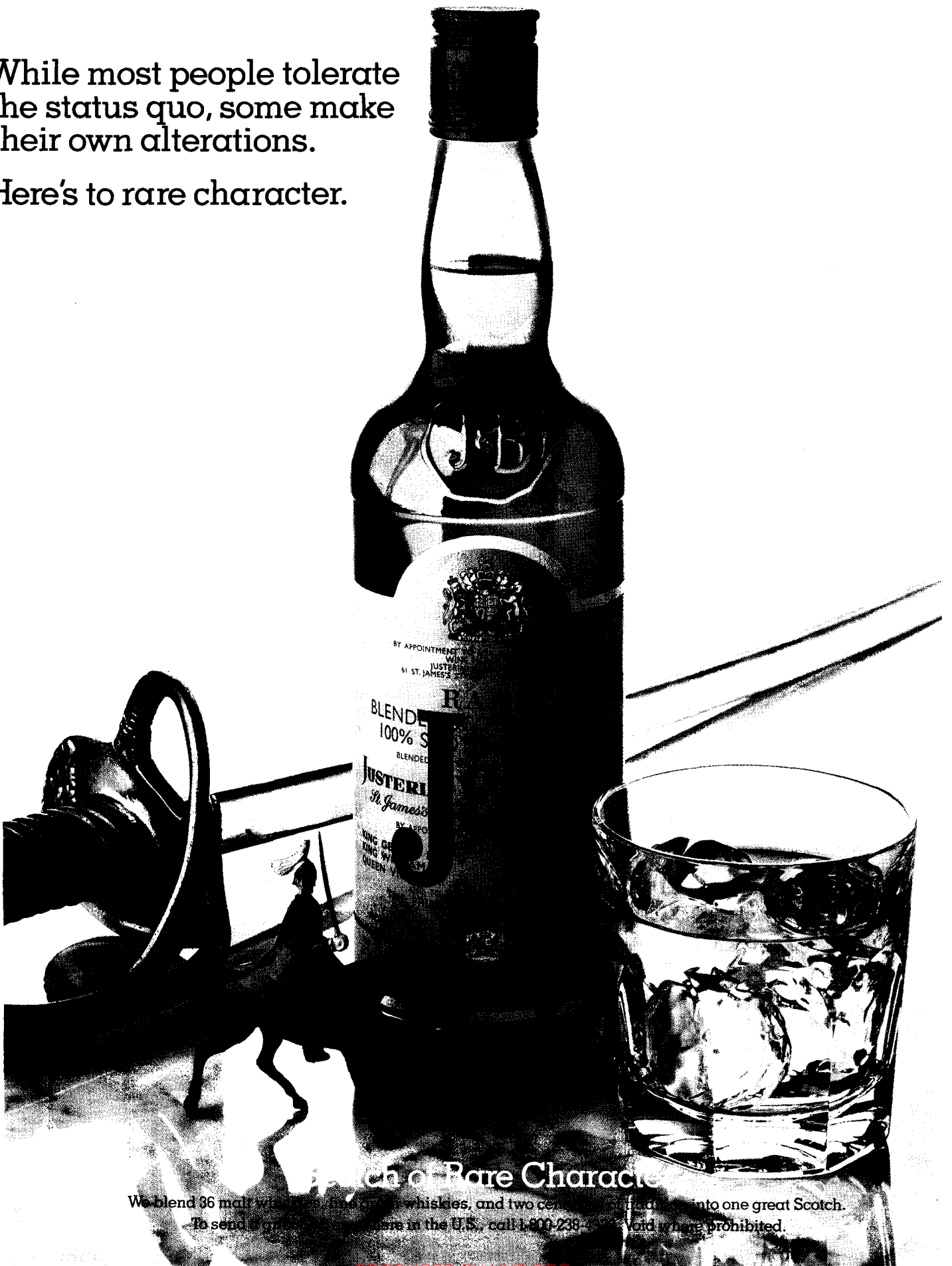
From the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," by Julia Ward Howe, which first appeared in the February, 1862, issue of *The Atlantic*:

"Mine eyes have seen the glory
of the coming of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage
where the grapes of wrath are
stored;
He hath loosed the fateful
lightning of His terrible swift
sword:
His truth is marching on. . . .
"He has sounded forth the
trumpet that shall never
retreat:
He is sifting out the hearts
men before His judgment
seat:
Oh, be swift, my soul, to a
swer Him! be jubilant, n
feet!
Our God is marching on."



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REPORTS & COMMENT

NOTES

WORK MARRIAGE

I DON'T WORK IN an office, so I miss out on a lot of things that people who do don't, such as a new pen whenever I want one, coffee breaks, comical stories about my dumb boss, the concept of the weekend, lunchtime jazzercise with my co-workers, a mysteriously burgeoning colony of Sweet 'N Low packets in my desk, nice clothes for daytime wear, and work marriage.

Work marriage is a relationship that exists between certain people of the opposite sex who work at the same place. For example, let's suppose that you, like me, are a man. In that case your work wife would be the woman in your office who

(a) as you walk past her desk on your way to a big meeting, tells you that you have dried shaving cream behind your ear

(b) has lunch with you pretty often

(c) returns stuff she borrows from your desk

(d) tells you things about her other (home) husband that he wouldn't want you to know

(e) waits for you to finish up so you can go down in the elevator together

(f) complains to you without embarrassment about an uncomfortable undergarment

(g) expects you to tell her the truth, more or less, about the thing she has done to her hair

(h) doesn't comment on how much you eat, drink, and smoke

(i) knows at least one thing about you—such as the fact that you can do a

pretty good imitation of Liza Minnelli—that your home wife doesn't know.

Work marriage is, in some ways, better than home marriage. For example, your work wife would never ask you why you don't just put your dishes right into the dishwasher instead of leaving them in the sink—she doesn't know you do it! Also, she would never get your car wedged between two other cars in the parking lot at Bradlees, sign you up to be the pie auctioneer at a church bazaar, or grab hold of your stomach and ask, "What's this? Blubber?" She knows you only as you appear between nine and five: recently bathed, fully dressed, largely awake, and in control of your life.

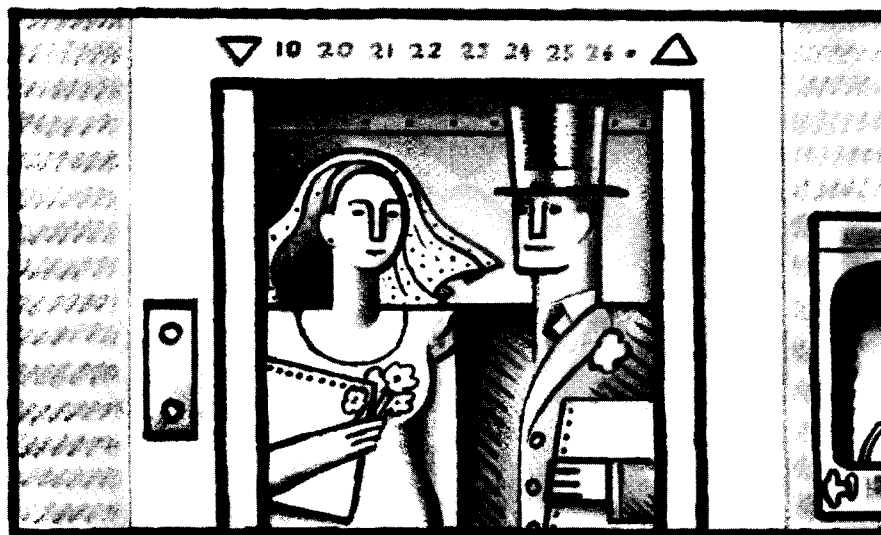
My wife and I both work at home. In that sense, I guess, my home wife is also my work wife. And yet this cannot be. Our argument about whether rapidly changing channels hurts the TV does not disappear at nine o'clock on Monday morning. Like many other self-employed (and thus work-single) people, I am forced to content myself with fleeting and ultimately unsatisfying pseudo work marriages, such as my relationship

with a check-out girl at the grocery store. She has a pretty good idea of what I like to eat, and I help her out some times by doing my own bagging, but that is about as far as it goes. (Perhaps I have merely discovered a new, less committed type of relationship: store dating.)

The only way to have a real work marriage is, sadly, to work. Sure, I'd like to work with a wife someday—*someday*. But I'm not willing, right now, to get a regular job in order to have one. There are just too many things about offices (no dogs or children, no nap whenever you want one, parking problems) that rub me the wrong way.

Meanwhile, my home wife and I keep trying to work out our differences. There are some indications that we are making progress. The other day she borrowed the ruler-alarm clock-thermometer that I use to hold down the pile of papers on my desk. This morning, without any hint from me, she brought it back. Next week maybe I'll return her scissors.

—David Owen



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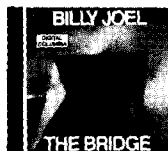
348441. Liona Bayd: Persona. (CBS)
347252. Kronos Quartet: Sauterthorpe/Sallinen/Glass/Nancarrow/Hendrix. (Digital—Nonesuch)
347153. Cyndi Lauper—True Colors. Top 10 Album. (Portrait)
346957. Steve Winwood—Back In The High Life. (Island)
335547. Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique—Berlin Philharmonic. (Digital—CBS Masterworks)
346809. Dvorak: Symphony No. 9 "New World" Carnival Overture. The London Philharmonic Orchestra. (Digital—Verese Sarabande)
346023. Genesis—Invisible Touch. (Atlantic)
281493. Stravinsky: Rite Of Spring—Mehta, N.Y. Phil. (CBS Masterworks)
302570. Mussorgsky/Ravel: Pictures At An Exhibition; Ravel: La Valse. Mehta, New York Phil. (CBS Masterworks)
273409. Beethoven: Piano Sonatas. Vladimir Horowitz. (CBS Masterworks)
339044. Mozart: Symphony No. 40, Bavarian Radio Symphony. (Digital—CBS Masterworks)
336578-396572. Bach: Sonatas for Flute and Harpsicord. (Counts as 2—Digital—CBS Masterworks)
343251. Bach: Goldberg Variations—Glenn Gould. (Digital—CBS Masterworks)
324822. Ravel: Bolero; etc. Maazel cond. Orchestre Nationale De France. (Digital—CBS Masterworks)
319996-399998. Motown's 25 #1 Hits From 25 Years. (Motown)
343624. Wynton Marsalis Trumpet Concertos. (Digital—CBS Masterworks)
328740. Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 26 (Coronation); Rados. Murray Perahia and English Chamber Orchestra. (Digital—CBS Masterworks)
337279. Placido Domingo—Save Your Nights for Me. (CBS)
339242. Puccini Heroines. (CBS Masterworks)
263293. Bolling: Suite For Flute & Jazz Piano. (CBS Masterworks)
321380. Barbra Streisand's Greatest Hits, Vol. II. (Columbia)
343715. Vivaldi—Four Seasons. Maazel, members Orch. National de France (Digital—CBS Masterworks)
343095. Philip Glass—Songs From Liquid Days. (CBS)
342097. Barbra Streisand—The Broadway Album. (Columbia)
348649. The Pachelbel Canon And Other Digital Delights. The Toronto Chamber Orchestra. (Digital—Fanfare)
346767. Johnny Mathis—Most Requested Songs. (Digitally remastered—Columbia)
321570. Beethoven: Symphony No. 5, Op. 67/Schubert: Symphony No. 8 (Unfinished). Vienna Phil. Orch./Lorin Maazel, Cond. (Digital—CBS Masterworks)
348706. Wynton Marsalis—J Mood. Much Later, Melodique; more. (Digital—Columbia)
326629. Bruce Springsteen—Born In The U.S.A. (Columbia)
347245. Spyro Gyra—Breakout. Elegant and hard edged! Freetail; Body Wave; Whirlwind; etc. (MCA)
246868. Jim Croce—Photographs And Memories—His Greatest Hits. Time In A Bottle; Bad, Bad Leroy Brown; etc. (Sajal)
345785. Top Gun (Soundtrack). #1 album! Kenny Loggins—Danger Zone; many more. (Columbia)
334391. Whitney Houston—Whitney Houston. Greatest Love Of All; You Give Good Love; Saving All My Love For You; etc. (Arista)
347492. Glenn Miller Orchestra—In The Digital Mood. (Digital—GRP)
333286. Phil Collins—No Jacket Required. Album of the Year! (Atlantic)
339200. Stevie Wonder—In Square Circle. #1 album. (Tamla)
314443. Neil Diamond's 12 Greatest Hits, Vol. 2. You Don't Bring Me Flowers (with Barbra Streisand); etc. (Columbia)
219477. Simon & Garfunkel's Greatest Hits. El Condor Pasa; Bridge Over Troubled Waters; etc. (Columbia)
336222. Dire Straits—Brothers In Arms. A #1 album! Money For Nothing; others. (Warner Bros.)
343327. Wynton Marsalis—Jolivet/Tonasi: Trumpet Concertos. Philharmonia Orchestra. (Digital—CBS Masterworks)
316604. Tchaikovsky: 1812 Overture; Beethoven: Wellington's Victory. Lorin Maazel, Vienna Phil. (Digital—CBS Masterworks)



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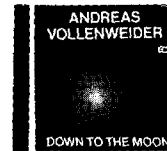
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Initial

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State

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Do you have a credit card? (Check one.) ☐ Yes ☐ No

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MODERN TIMES

CLOSE TO THE Equator the stimulation level is low. In moving from Tokyo to Kuala Lumpur, latitude 3 degrees north, my family changed from the hyperactivity and constant challenge of the super-First World to a hazier, more detached life.

There are newspapers here in Malaysia, but it's quick work to read them, since, with a few brave exceptions, they embrace the government's view that news should be "constructive" and upbeat. Several times a month the foreign papers are kept out; in my mailbox I find a mimeographed notice: "This issue has been detained by the Police." On the shortwave radio the English-language broadcasts are dominated by Radio Moscow ("... health levels are also rising rapidly in the Ukraine ..."), which drowns out the feeble BBC and Voice of America. After a few weeks of being sheltered from news and controversy, I hesitated to open the first box of magazines and books that arrived, by sea mail, from home. All those opinions! All that heat and passion about trends I didn't even know were under way. I was surprised that the box, with the magazines stacked on top of one another, didn't melt down.

Isolated, we are thrown back on our own resources. We read books straight through—no one is going to call to interrupt us, and mostly the phone doesn't work anyway. We take our children to see jungles and beaches, and we watch the monsoon-season squalls blow across

the sky. I cling to my one true lifeline to the rest of the world.

In the old, colonial days the expatriate's lifeline from Malaya was the Singapore packet ship, bringing tinned biscuits and the weekly mail. In the "old," pre-computer days it was the Telex machine, expensive but quick. On arrival in Malaysia I initially relied on the Telex, scrawling dispatches in big block letters and taking my sheaf of papers to a downtown office, where I could chat with the Telex girls. Now I have "advanced" to a more stylish and direct connection.

My new lifeline is MCI Mail, the computer network that in theory provides a cheap and immediate link to anyone with a computer and a modem, anywhere in the world. In the United States using it was quick and painless; here the gap between theory and reality threatens to swallow me up.

Malaysia has a brand-new "public data network," called Maypac, which in principle allows me to call a number in Kuala Lumpur to be connected with MCI Mail. But for obscure reasons MCI and Maypac couldn't make connections during my first two months of trying. My fallback plan was to attach my modem, brought from America, to my home phone and, on the days the phone was working, to call MCI's number in the United States. But the connection, via satellite, was too fuzzy. To make matters worse, on my second try the modem blew up when my 240-to-110-volt transformer failed. I tried another modem, bought in Japan, which ran on batteries and did not explode. This one clamped onto the rounded telephone handsets that are standard in the United States and Japan. But residential phones

in Malaysia are squared off, and the modem won't fit.

I refused to be denied the convenience of a modern computerized link. I learned that Singapore has a data network—and no disagreements with MCI. From pay phones in Malaysia you can reach Singapore, and the pay phone have rounded handsets onto which the modem, with some shoving, will fit. I signed up with the Singapore network. My preparations were complete.

This is how I now use advanced technology to keep in touch: I leave home in the morning dragging a big blue canvas sack. In the sack are the clamp-on modem, a small Radio Shack computer, modem-to-computer cable, and eighteen to twenty pounds of Malaysia coins. The coins are each worth twenty sen, or about eight American cents, and they're thick and heavy. One of them is good for seven seconds of connection to Singapore, so I need them in bulk. When my supply gets low, I stop at Bank Bumiputra Malaysia ("Bank of the Original Sons of the Soil of Malaysia") where I can walk in with a 100-ringgit (\$40) bill and walk out an hour later with my coins.

I go to one of Kuala Lumpur's busiest streets and set up shop under the sign that says TELEFON. (Malaysia has perfected simplified English spelling. Where you go after high school is to *kolij*; a big undertaking is a *projek*.) The modem goes on top of the phone; the coins get piled in big mounds wherever you can find a flat surface. The ones left over sag in my pants pockets, making me list. I raise my right knee and brace it against the bottom of the phone, rest the computer on my now-horizontal right thigh and connect the cable. I'm ready to begin. I dial the number in Singapore, wait to hear the computer tone, and slam the handset down into the modem before the tone cuts off and my first twenty sen's worth of time expires. Then comes the hard part: shoveling twenty-sen pieces into the phone every seven seconds, and digging spares out of my pockets when the mounds dwindle down while trying to type the commands necessary to make contact. "NQJFXPN03106004759" is only the first part of the elaborate sign-on code. Every four or five minutes the phone's coin box fills up and I have to break contact, disassemble my equipment, and move to the next phone in line. I've chosen this location because I don't know any other with so many phones in a row.

HOW TO HELP A LITTLE GIRL MAKE IT ALL THE WAY TO 7.

It wasn't long ago that if little Kamala Rama drank the water in her village she would have taken her life in her hands.

Today, thanks to Save the Children, she can have clean water to wash with, and fresh water for her mother to cook with.

And she can do something else that was once unheard of in her village for a little girl.

She can go to school. Even go past the fifth grade.

When you first sponsor a child through Save the Children, you have no idea how much just \$16 a month can do.

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Better food. Clean drinking water. Decent housing. Medical care. A chance to go to school.

In fact, for over 50 years, Save the Children has been working little life-saving miracles here in America and around the world.

And the wonderful feeling of sponsoring a child comes to only 52¢ a day. The cost of a cup of coffee.

What's more, you'll get a photo of the child you sponsor, a personal history, progress reports and a chance to correspond, if you'd like.

Please, won't you help. Send in the coupon today.

There are still so many children who need the chance Kamala Rama got.

The chance to make it to 7.



Gary Shaye

Because 50 years of experience has taught us that direct handouts are the least effective way of helping children, your sponsorship contributions are not distributed in this way. Instead, they are used to help children in the most effective way possible—by helping the entire community with projects and services, such as health care, education, food production and nutrition.

Established 1932 The original child sponsorship agency Your sponsorship payments and contributions are U.S. income tax deductible. We are indeed proud of our use of funds. Based on last year's audit, an exceptionally large percentage of each dollar spent was used for program services and direct aid to children and their communities. Our annual summary with financial statement is available upon request.

☐ Yes, I would like to sponsor a child. My first monthly sponsorship payment of \$16 is enclosed. I prefer to sponsor a ☐ boy ☐ girl ☐ either in the area I've checked below.

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- ☐ Bangladesh

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- ☐ Lebanon

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- ☐ Nepal
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- ☐ Southwest Hispanic (U.S.)
- ☐ Sri Lanka
- ☐ Thailand

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☐ Instead of becoming a sponsor at this time, I am enclosing a contribution of

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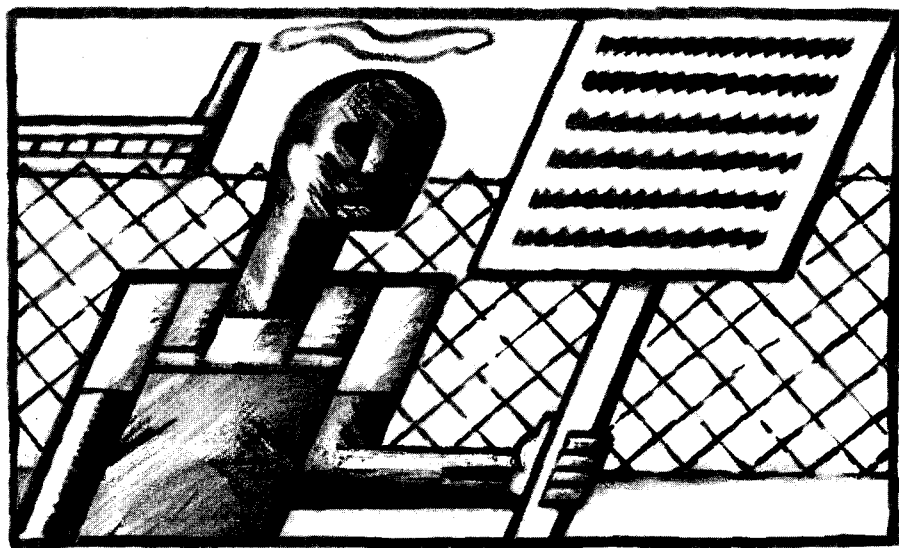
There is a bus stop right by my telephones, and a hangout favored by off-duty police. To the regulars I have become an institution, a major spectacle, a dependably hilarious diversion to replace the rock concerts that Malaysia recently outlawed. As I fumble to keep the money going into the slot, coins inevitably fall to the ground. Little children with backpacks, waiting for the bus to school, dart between my feet, filching twenty-ten pieces and skipping away in glee. Women in beautiful saris, sober Moslems going to work in the nearby Tabung Haji ("Fund for Pilgrimages to Mecca"), young toughs on their loud motorbikes, all laugh openly at the sweaty, red-faced foreigner doing his

Modern Times routine at the phones. The humiliation of the West is complete. Then the daily inch-a-minute downpour begins, and I try to hold an umbrella with my chin.

When I have finished, I carefully repack my equipment, sweep the remaining coins into the bag, and walk off looking straight ahead, with as much dignity as I can muster. Tomorrow I will do it all again.

On my way home I pass the Telex office. Through the window I see my friends the Telex girls, in their smart tan uniforms, smiling as they sit at their machines. I am too modern to need the likes of them.

—James Fallows



SOUTH AFRICA

THE BUSINESS OF FIGHTING APARTHEID

American companies seem to have little impact on the system, whether they stay or leave

FOR YEARS THE disinvestment movement seemed a model of futility. The more that activists pressed United States companies to leave South Africa, the more those companies were determined to stay. Last fall, however, the years of toil suddenly seemed worth it. In the course of little more than a month General Motors, IBM, and Coca-Cola all announced that they were pulling out. The corporate exodus from South Africa seemed to have begun in earnest.

For all the fanfare, however, South Africans will still be able to buy IBM PCs and cars inspected by Mr. Goodwrench. And disinvestment will not interrupt profit flows. The three corporations are not closing up shop, only selling out to local businessmen, and all plan to maintain a presence through licensing agreements, distribution contracts, and technology transfers. (An exception to the rule is Eastman Kodak, which in November announced that both the company and its product would be leaving South Africa.)

Consider the case of Coca-Cola, which announced its pullout last September. Given that Coke controls 75 percent of South Africa's soft-drink market, I expected the response to its decision to be sackcloth and ashes. In fact the announcement hardly aroused any interest. While in Atlanta the company was declaring its distaste for apartheid, in South Africa it was saying that Coke would continue to be available. Accord-

ing to local newspapers, the magic syrup would be transported in tankers across the Atlantic. All in all, it was a sweet deal for Coke, providing it with political capital at home and continued profits in South Africa.

Disinvestment can look very different up close from the way it does in the United States. Reflecting this, the debate in America over U.S. business in South Africa has shifted ground. What happens when U.S. companies are sold to South African ones? Are blacks worse off for the change? Are American companies better employers than South African ones? Some have argued that disinvestment, as currently practiced represents the worst of both worlds: it allows companies to benefit from apartheid without incurring any responsibility for reforming it. That, of course, assumes that American companies in South Africa have been able to make difference. What does the record show

DISINVESTMENT IS A sensitive issue in South Africa—advocating it actually a crime—and it's not hard to see why. American logos appear everywhere, and, for whites at least, they are associated with the good life. Looking up car-rental agencies in the phone book, one finds listings for Avis and Hertz; among the offerings are GMs and Fords. When low on gas, cars can be filled with either Mobil or Caltex (owned jointly by Texaco and Chevron). As for lodging, a trusty Holiday Inn beckons everywhere. Colgate-Palmolive is South Africa's leader in shampoos, and Kellogg's is a mainstay at the breakfast table.

For all the abundance of brand names, however, the roughly 240 American companies in South Africa occupy a relatively small niche in the country's economy. The issue of unemployment is good illustration. For years the strongest argument against disinvestment was that it would throw thousands of blacks out of work. Even advocates of disinvestment did not contest this but argued that the benefits would far outweigh the drawbacks. Now it seems that the unemployment fallout will be quite modest. For instance, about 4,000 people have been involved in getting Coke to market. Only 460 of them, however, have been employees of Coca-Cola; the rest work in operations, such as bottling, that are already controlled by local interests. Most of the 460 will be kept on, because Coke is not shutting down its f

ilities, only selling them to South Africans. At most, says a spokesman for Coke in Atlanta, 100 to 200 people could be affected by the change.

Even that figure is atypically high. According to the Investor Responsibility Research Center, in Washington, D.C., forty-five firms employing 8,700 people disinvested from January of 1985 to mid-1986; of these, only fourteen liquidated their operations, throwing a total of 594 people out of work. Very few employees of the other forty-one companies lost their jobs. In recent years economic re-entrenchment in South Africa has caused more loss of jobs at American companies than has disinvestment. Months before GM and IBM decided to disinvest, GM laid off 1,200 workers and IBM 300—both in response to economic recession. American companies employ only a small portion of South Africa's black work force—about 50,000 of more than 6 million workers—that even if all the companies suddenly shut down, the country's black unemployment rate (30 percent last December) would rise by about one percentage point.

For black workers, disinvestment generally means trading an American boss for a South African one. To many Americans, that sounds like a drastic step backward, a move from factories here blacks and whites whistle while they work to Dickensian hellholes of exploitation and bias. This impression has been created largely by the Sullivan principles, which since 1977 have held U.S. companies in South Africa to rigorous employment standards. The principles are the creation of the Reverend Leon Sullivan, a black Baptist minister in Philadelphia and a longtime member of GM's board of directors. Sullivan devised the code in the mid-1970s, at a time when U.S. companies operating in South Africa were beginning to feel the heat of protest. The idea was that if the companies were not going to leave they should at least become model employers. The principles call for, among other things, desegregation of the workplace, equal pay for equal work, promotion of non-whites, and generous social spending. Although the code is entirely voluntary and lacks enforcement mechanisms, continued pressure from angry shareholders has made compliance seem like good business sense. About two thirds of the U.S. companies in South Africa have signed on.

All signatories are rated according to their performance. The rating process is

quite complex. Sullivan evaluation forms are thirty pages long, and the information they require is so tangled that a special breed of Sullivan specialists has arisen to compile it. The forms are sent to Arthur D. Little & Co., the consulting firm, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where a staff of six, using an arcane formula, tabulates the companies' annual grades. The process is expensive, with signatories paying up to \$8,400 for the privilege of being judged. To most, the money seems well spent. In 1985 a full three quarters of all signatories received passing grades—"making good progress" and "making progress"—which can do much to placate concerned shareholders. Arthur D. Little's annual reports brim with tributes to the companies' progress. "Signatories today are satisfying requirements which they would not have tolerated when the program was initiated," the firm reported in 1985. "This is made possible by a dynamic, voluntary effort."

ASSESSMENTS OF THAT claim vary, depending on who the judge is. I discovered this on a visit to Colgate-Palmolive's facilities in a heavy-industry belt east of Johannesburg. I was received by Deryk Magid, the company's director of human resources in South Africa. "U.S. business has been at the cutting edge of change in South Africa," he told me. Fifteen years' worth of "affirmative action," Magid said, has produced changes of "earth-shattering" proportions. He mentioned Colgate's high minimum wage, its desegregated facilities, its abundant philanthropy. (Colgate receives the top Sullivan rating.) When I asked how many non-white managers worked at Colgate, Magid became somewhat less animated. The answer was two out of fifty, or four percent: Colgate's overall work force is 60 percent non-white (black, Asian, and "colored," or mixed race). "It's not an area where we're as far along as we'd like," Magid admitted.

I asked for permission to wander through Colgate's facilities and interview workers. That would not be feasible, Magid said, offering instead to select some workers himself. I was dubious. My suspicions increased when I was ushered into the company's boardroom. However, the six workers, black unionists all, turned out to be outspoken. My first question, concerning how long the company had been unionized, elicited angry descriptions of the tough,

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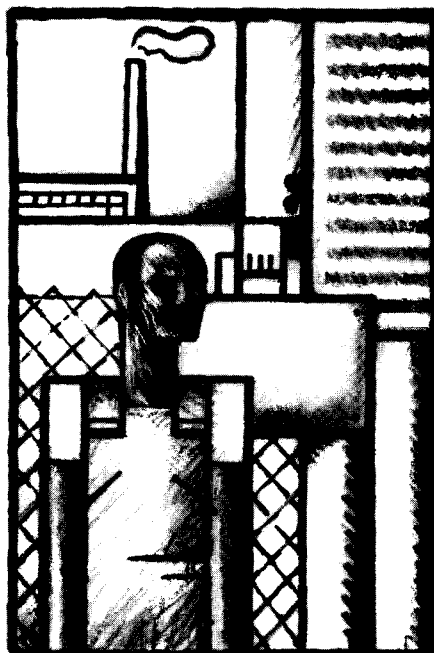
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drawn-out campaign that had been waged in 1981 for recognition; Colgate ultimately yielded, but only after a national boycott had been organized. Colgate's current practices also occasioned grumbling. One worker, a lab technician, complained that whites had a much easier time of it at the plant. "By the fact of being white, a man can walk in off the street and become a foreman," he said. "But every black man, whether educated or not, has to be trained first. In my mind, that's discrimination." When I mentioned the low figure that I had been quoted for black managers, the workers said that even that was inflated. "We don't have any black managers here," a packer said.

The discrepancy is probably explained by a recent tendency among American companies to create high-level positions for blacks—positions that many workers dismiss as window dressing. But even counting those positions, blacks hold only two percent of all managerial positions at Sullivan companies (they constitute 73 percent of the South African population). Whites account for 95 percent, and Asians and coloreds, who constitute 12 percent of the population, make up the rest. The companies claim that they can't find enough qualified blacks to fill high-level positions. Blacks vehemently dispute this. Mohale Mahanyele, the director of a black placement firm, told me that over the past few years he has written to virtually every American company in South Africa, offering to provide blacks for skilled and managerial jobs. "I've got black graduates by the thousands—many of them unemployed, underemployed, misemployed," he said. "I'm begging these companies to take them. The response overwhelmingly is, 'No, we have them, we can provide them from our own resources.' Then, when they get to the States, they say, 'We don't have qualified blacks.'" He said that the Sullivan principles have been a dismal failure.

I found general agreement that at the time of their introduction the principles played an important role. Spurred on by the principles, American companies took the lead in desegregating bathrooms and eating facilities. And, Colgate notwithstanding, U.S. firms were among the first in South Africa to recognize black trade unions. They thus played a role in the government's decision in 1979 to recognize the right of black workers to organize.

In recent years, though, progress has slowed. Any doubts I had on this score were resolved during a visit to the headquarters of General Motors, in Port Elizabeth. (I made the trip about a month before the company announced its intention to leave.) Perhaps more than any other corporation, GM, influenced by Rev. Sullivan, has sought to enact the principles. I was therefore surprised by the frank assessment I received from George Stegmann, GM's director of personnel and public affairs in South Africa. The principles, he said, "may have been effective in 1977 and 1978," when they had something of a "catalytic effect" on local companies. "But looking at the situation today, we frankly have to ques-



tion whether the principles have outlived their intended purpose." Most companies, he explained, were less eager to see results than to chalk up good ratings, which they could do simply by spending large sums of money. Moreover, Stegmann said, the companies had failed to consult blacks.

The lack of input from blacks helps explain how companies can get such stellar ratings from Arthur D. Little and such poor ones from their own workers. The data for the ratings come exclusively from the companies themselves, and most have awarded themselves As. Those best positioned to evaluate corporate performance—black trade unions—charge that they are rarely consulted. This is not for lack of trying. At General Motors, for instance, two black union representatives told me, "At a certain

stage we took the Sullivan principle very seriously." When the Arthur D. Little representative came to South Africa, a union representative telephoned him in Johannesburg and asked him to visit Port Elizabeth. He never came. "He wasn't even interested," the two unionists told me. Today, they said most workers regard the principles as "farce." (Reid Weedon, the head of Arthur D. Little's monitoring unit, says that he has no recollection of any such incident. He says that he has traveled to Port Elizabeth four times to meet with black unionists. "One of the major purposes of going to South Africa every year," he says, "is to understand how blacks regard these issues, and to see how we can shape our questioning in response to their views." Nonetheless, I found widespread dissatisfaction among workers over their role in the monitoring process.)

In general, black workers give American companies a modest edge over South African ones, saying that the pressure exerted on U.S. companies has made them somewhat more responsive to workers' demands. The difference is so slim, however, that no one sees it as an argument against disinvestment. Most union leaders have endorsed disinvestment as a form of protest against the government, and many rank-and-file members support this stand. But the support is tempered by fears of unemployment. This ambivalence is reflected in the many polls that have been conducted on the issue. The results vary widely as to be almost useless. The numbers substantiate only two firm conclusions: workers don't want to lose the jobs, and they want foreign corporations in South Africa to confront apartheid head on.

AMERICAN COMPANIES have themselves gradually accepted the need for stronger action. Feeling both pressured and frustrated, the Sullivan signatories two years ago approved a strongly worded amendment to the principle, called the Fourth Amplification. It asked of the companies that they work for "the ending of all apartheid laws" by undertaking projects in the area of "social justice."

The Fourth Amplification is probably the most radical commitment ever required of U.S. companies abroad. Before it was adopted, U.S. corporations in South Africa regarded themselves as guests who considered it impolite to sa-

so if they were uncomfortable with their accommodations. When it came to getting involved, companies invariably preferred safe, do-good works. Recognizing this, the Sullivan principles rated companies on how much they spent to "improve the quality of life" for blacks, coloreds, and Asians.

Since 1977 Sullivan signatories have spent more than \$170 million—most of it on employee housing, apprenticeship programs, day-care centers, and loans to black businessmen. Most popular of all have been education projects. American companies have funded everything from libraries and literacy courses to vocational training and teacher upgrading. Under a program called Adopt-a-School, companies in the United States have pledged assistance to more than 300 schools across the country. They have also handed out an impressive number of scholarships—almost 1,200 in 1986 alone.

By far the most ambitious venture was PACE (Planned Advancement of Community Education) Commercial College, a showcase secondary school, in Soweto. Opened in 1981, PACE was conceived and funded by U.S. corporations as an elite school intended to prepare blacks for universities or the business world. The \$7 million facility featured well-qualified instructors and the latest in equipment, including IBM computers. By locating the school in Soweto, American businessmen were making a visible commitment to bettering the lives of black youths. The school had an enrollment of 600, and by the time the first class graduated, in 1985, only about ten percent of the students had dropped out.

By then, however, Soweto's schools were in chaos, and PACE was no exception. In fact, its privileged status made it a special target for young militants. White teachers had their car tires slashed, and the campus was raided by security forces. Many PACE students were forced to flee the township temporarily; partly as a result, they did poorly in their college-entrance exams. Disappointed American donors began bailing out, and last November PACE suspended operations. A denouement of sorts came in September, when, after being addressed by a U.S. business representative, students took an American flag and burned it.

It would be hard to come up with a more instructive parable. PACE was American corporate generosity at its

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best, a concerted effort to provide blacks with educational opportunities usually denied them. Ultimately, though, PACE could not escape the crushing deprivation that surrounded it. In the field of education, apartheid pursues a philosophy of separate and unequal, and no amount of private giving could hope to compensate. However well-intentioned, a project like PACE was clearly unequipped to deal with the country's fundamental problem—white domination.

As this realization sank in, some executives of U.S. companies, in both America and South Africa, began pressing for a tougher, more activist stance. They encountered a lot of resistance. Other executives feared that a too-aggressive strategy would breed resentment among South African whites, thus complicating the real job at hand—making money. The debate became heated, and a power struggle over the issue developed at the American Chamber of Commerce (Amcham), the trade organization for U.S. companies in South Africa.

The balance was eventually tipped by the gathering fury in South Africa's townships and the growing protest on American campuses. Rev. Sullivan himself, disillusioned with the principles that bore his name, lobbied hard for stronger involvement. And so, in late 1984, the Fourth Amplification was finally endorsed. Now, in order to get a top rating, signatories would have to challenge the system head on, even if that entailed breaking the law.

In the past two years U.S. companies have helped black employees find housing in white-only areas—a violation of the Group Areas Act, which calls for residential segregation. Others have barred their scholarships from being used at private all-white technical schools, in an attempt to pressure those institutions into accepting blacks. In March of 1985 Amcham called on the South African government to initiate negotiations with black groups; it was the first business organization to call publicly for such a move. The chamber followed with a slick advertising campaign urging, among other things, the unbanning of all political organizations—a clear reference to the African National Congress.

To South African blacks, such activities seemed long overdue. Whites, though, were less impressed. On two occasions South African businessmen asked Amcham representatives not to accompany them on visits to govern-

ment officials. The government itself was even more standoffish. Its attitude was demonstrated after U.S. banks suspended new loans to South Africa in mid-1985. A delegation of bankers came to discuss how the suspension might be reversed; the meetings, however, did not go well. "We were all very surprised at the hawkishness of their position," one banker who was at the meeting recalls. Rather than discuss possible reforms, he says, "they told us that the ANC is a KGB organization and that they weren't going to deal with it." He has concluded that "lobbying the South African government is tantamount to hitting your head against the wall."

Probably the single most daring effort at change was mounted by General Motors. Port Elizabeth, the automaking capital of South Africa, is a tough city on the Indian Ocean. It has few scenic pleasures save its beachfront. Unlike many other cities, where the beaches have been desegregated, Port Elizabeth continued to reserve certain areas for whites. Last February the GM managing director, Robert White, an American, resolved to do something about the situation. In a letter to local newspapers White criticized the reserved-beach policy and offered legal assistance to any non-white employee arrested for violating it. In the end no one took White up on his offer. But it did attract a great deal of publicity, and the Port Elizabeth City Council, feeling embarrassed, eventually voted to change the law. GM, it seemed, had put a small but visible dent in the armor of apartheid. The company said with satisfaction in its monthly newsletter, "Initiatives such as Mr. White's are perhaps demonstrative of what responsible U.S. corporations can achieve by remaining in South Africa and using their best efforts to create a more equitable social structure."

Unfortunately, the story doesn't end there. The city council's decision stirred up the Herstigte National Party, a far-right group that could not tolerate the idea of blacks and whites bathing together. Marshaling its forces, the HNP forced a referendum on the city council's decision. With the ruling National Party recommending that voters abstain, the right carried the issue by a meager 1,000 votes. The city council again considered the issue—and again voted to open the beaches. The matter was then turned over to the provincial government, which was to implement the new policy. There it remains. Meanwhile, Port

Elizabeth's beaches are still segregated.

GM paid for White's outspokenness. As George Stegmann, the public-affairs director, explained to me, "The majority of people who purchase motor vehicles in this country still happen to be white. When they see GM proposing that beaches be opened, they form the opinion that GM is 'anti-South African.'" In short, sales dropped, and some GM dealers complained. The experience sent a strong signal. If GM couldn't affect apartheid on a patch of beach, how could it and other companies hope to bring about broader political change? GM has answered that question with its feet. And Rev. Sullivan has called on all U.S. companies to leave South Africa if apartheid is not dismantled by the end of May.

THE GOOD INTENTIONS behind the Fourth Amplification, then, have come to naught. But opposition from white consumers is not the sole reason. Few executives sought to emulate White's effort; in fact, many disdained it. An example is Peter Morum, a retired managing director of Firestone. Firestone's plant is situated about a mile down the road from GM's, and Morum, a South African, was frank with me about his neighbor: "I'm committed to the company, the community, the country—which is not the case with the Bob Whites of the world. If Bob White stands up and says something and the roof falls in, he can bugger off." He added, "My perception of this whole American thing is that John Dukes of company XYZ has to get his name in the papers on some issue. He can then mail it overseas and say, 'I'm doing my job.' These people have no commitment to the country. They're not South Africans, they're Americans."

Peter Morums are much more prevalent than Bob Whites at U.S. companies; the overwhelming majority of the executives are white South Africans. And while some South African businessmen have aggressively urged the government to change, many dismiss fundamental reform as quickly as other whites do. Consider, for instance, Ken Mason, a South African who is the executive director of the American Chamber of Commerce. I interviewed Mason at Amcham's Johannesburg office, which, oddly enough, is in the clubhouse of an exclusive golf club. When the subject of the white-minority government came up, Mason turned combative. "Those i-

the United States who try to instill a sense of moral outrage about South Africa have no cognizance of how far the government has really moved," he told me. "There's been a lot of progress here." Rather than criticize South Africa, he said, America should attend to some of "the skeletons it has in its own cupboard"—for example, the poor state of the Indian reservations. As for South Africa's ongoing state of emergency, he said, "You do need stability before you can bring about change. And some stability has been achieved."

More than 20,000 people have been detained under the state of emergency. Hundreds have been killed and tortured. The government has closed schools and gagged the press with ever more restrictive measures. Nonetheless, many white South African businessmen regard the state of emergency as critical to restoring business confidence. Those who work at U.S. companies are no exception. "Business attitudes in South Africa are dominated by the mood of the moment," a top (European) executive at a major U.S. enterprise told me. "If the sun shines and not too many people are getting killed, things seem fine to most South African businessmen." The attitude of South Africans who run foreign companies, he added, "tends to be the same."

Recently Black Sash, a civil-rights activist group made up mostly of white women, polled twenty-five companies on their policies for paying employees detained under the state of emergency. The group found that only four of the companies followed a policy of paying detainees' wages in full—and they were all South African. Most of the American companies paid half or three quarters. "On the whole," Zoe Riordan, who conducted the research, said to me, "foreign-owned companies didn't show up at all well in the survey."

When U.S. companies sell their assets to South Africans, then, one shouldn't expect too much change; in most respects the companies already are South African.

IF U.S. COMPANIES seem unlikely to accomplish much by remaining in South Africa, they seem unlikely to accomplish any more by leaving. In the short term, at least, disinvestment will probably drive white South Africans further into the *laager* (the Boer equivalent of a bunker). This was foreshadowed last fall when Congress voted to impose sanc-

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tions. Within weeks the South African government had cracked down on the United Democratic Front, the country's major opposition group; accelerated its policy of forced removal of blacks; and started an aggressive campaign against neighboring Mozambique.

The limits on American influence were summed up for me in a conversation I had aboard a flight from Johannesburg to Cape Town. My seatmate was an elderly British man who had spent most of his life in Africa and the past three years in South Africa, where he worked for a British communications company. The discussion turned to sanctions. Like virtually every other white businessman I met in South Africa, he passionately opposed them. Sanctions would only deepen Boer stubbornness, harden white attitudes, make progress all but impossible. Well, I asked when

he had finished, was he implying that a decision not to impose sanctions would hasten reform? No, he confessed, and gave a loud, embarrassed laugh.

In the end disinvestment really has value only on the symbolic level. In South Africa, though, symbols count for a lot. Both blacks and whites attach great importance to how Americans view their country. Virtually all South Africans perceive President Reagan to be a good friend of the Botha Government. During my stay I heard whites repeatedly praise the President and blacks repeatedly condemn him. It was difficult to persuade members of either group that on South Africa the President does not speak for the American people. When companies like GM, IBM, and Coca-Cola begin pulling out, however, that message could not be more clear.

—Michael Massing



WASHINGTON

NO REFUGEES NEED APPLY

*Six years ago Congress eased
restrictions on seekers of political asylum.
The Administration has been accused
of thwarting Congress's intent*

IN LATE 1979 THE Senate passed, by a vote of 85-0, what later became known as the Refugee Act of 1980. It called for, among other things, the adoption of a neutral standard for granting political asylum to refugees—neutral toward countries and ideologies. This was a marked change from the 1953 Refugee Relief Act, which gave automatic prefer-

ence to refugees from Communist countries. In addition, the 1980 act incorporated the language of the 1967 United Nations Protocol on Refugees, which defined a refugee as someone who, "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is . . . unable or . . . unwilling to return to it." Almost as an afterthought, the drafters of the legislation added a section on the granting of political asylum to foreigners already inside the United States. In 1978 the number of refugees granted this status was about 2,000; the new act raised the number to 5,000 and stipulated that such applicants for asylum had only to establish the "well-founded fear" of persecution aimed specifically at

them to be granted asylum, making them permanent residents.

"We never thought we were doing something controversial," Jerry Tinker, who, as a legislative aide to Senator Edward Kennedy, worked on the law, said recently. "Asylum adjudications just were not a big issue." They have since become a big issue, partly because in the seven years since the act was passed the world has become a more violent place, with the outbreak of a general war in the Middle East and the intensification of three civil wars in Central America, and partly because critics think that the Reagan Administration has chosen to enforce the law with ideological selectivity. Arthur Helton, the director of the political-asylum project for the Lawyer Committee for Human Rights, says that since 1980 only 20 to 25 percent of all those who have applied for asylum have succeeded in their claims. "For Bulgarians, Romanians, Russians, Afghans, Libyans—refugees from the countries the United States was at odds with, the approval rate was fifty to eighty percent. For Haitians, Salvadorans, and Guatemalans, the average approval rate fluctuated between one and five percent."

In 1983, a year when the civil war in Guatemala raged at barbarous levels, only one Guatemalan claim for political asylum adjudicated by the Immigration and Naturalization Service was granted. Sixty-seven were denied, and thousands avoided entanglement with the system altogether by entering the underground world of the illegal alien. Salvadorans fared only slightly better. In 1981, the year of some of the most extreme death squad atrocities, two Salvadorans got asylum, while 154 were turned away; in 1982 there were 65 approvals and 97 disapprovals for Salvadorans; in 1983 there were 71 approvals and 2,914 disapprovals. In 1983 Senator Dennis DeConcini, a Democrat from Arizona, first proposed a law that would prevent the deportation of Salvadorans to their home country, granting them "extended voluntary departure"—a temporary safe haven—but the Administration strongly opposed it, though it routinely gives the status to Poles. In 1985 Alan C. Nelsor, the commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, stated that EVD for Salvadorans should not be permitted or it might "lead to an invasion of feet people magnifying the migration from that region, making what we already see as a stream become a torrent. In 1985 three percent of Salvadorans

who applied for asylum to INS district directors succeeded (74 granted, 2,299 denied), one percent of Guatemalans (5 granted, 427 denied), and 38 percent of Cubans (451 granted, 737 denied).

"With the Central Americans, the Administration was locked in a terrible dilemma," Jerry Tinker says. "Congress had put in this certification process for human rights in El Salvador—without it [military-aid] money couldn't be released. The Administration felt, How could they grant a lot of Salvadoran asylum claims and prove everything is unky-dory down there? I think Elliot Abrams [who then headed the State Department's Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs] really started taking a tough line." A 1981 study group of the United Nations High Commission on Refugees reported that "there seems to be a systematic practice designed to secure the return of Salvadorans, irrespective of the merits of their asylum claims."

RECENTLY I CALLED on Laura Dietrich, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of Human Rights, to ask for her reaction to these charges. Her office, in consultation with the State Department's desk officer for a given applicant's home country, issues a "advisory report" on that applicant's asylum claim. "The statistics are not a valid means of creating a political argument," she said. "The law doesn't say that you have to hit a certain percentage. It simply says that there is a criterion against which the case must be judged. And the fact is that in countries closer to the United States, where people can just talk here, of course we're going to get larger numbers of cases where the individuals themselves answer 'No' to 'Have you ever been harmed, detained, threatened, tortured, or harassed in any way?' When you ask them 'Why did you come to the United States?' they say, 'I came to work' or 'Because things were bad in El Salvador.' Suppose you were the admissions director at Harvard, and you get a hundred applications and ninety-nine that don't meet the criteria for acceptance, and next time you approve fifty because fifty meet your criteria. You either have a ninety-nine percent denial rate or a fifty percent denial rate, but you haven't changed your criteria."

But political refugees from Central America say that a denial of asylum is a more serious matter than rejection from the Ivy League. A recent Americas Watch

report on El Salvador charged that the State Department was underreporting human-rights violations in that country. Although "the number of targeted killings and disappearances by military and paramilitary forces remains far below the staggering numbers committed from 1979 to 1983," the report said, "the increase during the first six months of 1985 is ominous and the maintenance of the same modus operandi as in the past makes clear that death squad apparatus remains in place. . . . Many victims are still tortured before being murdered." But Dietrich's position was that the number of human-rights violations in El Salvador is not high enough to warrant a more lenient interpretation of the asylum procedure for Salvadoran applicants. "I know we're getting a lot of frivolous claims—I don't know why," she said. When asked what she would do if someone she knew personally had received a death threat—if she would consider *that* adequate for a "well-founded fear" of persecution—she answered, "A hundred and seventeen people a month killed in one city in the United States and thirty in El Salvador, *really*." Presumably she was citing current State Department figures on Salvadoran death-squad activities.

"But what if someone got a note from a death squad and that caused them to flee?" I asked. "Death squads don't always send notes—but I've heard of such cases. Wouldn't that be enough for you to grant asylum?"

"I'm sorry," Dietrich said. "A note from the death squad. It just doesn't carry a lot of weight. A note. Think about it for a minute. [There are] seven hundred and fifty thousand Salvadorans in the U.S. [and] a population of five million people in El Salvador. A *note* from the death squad? I wonder how seriously it would be taken. If your asylum application simply says, 'I received a note from the death squad,' I don't think so. Anybody who has a serious case is going to give you details—why did I get a note? But just a note I wouldn't particularly perceive as being grounds for asylum, without other information."

LUIS DOMINGUEZ received a note from a death squad, and his story provides a grim counterpoint to Dietrich's equanimity. Dominguez, an agricultural engineer, was until May of 1980 the director of the National Center of Agricultural Technology of El Salvador, an organization involved in the controversial agrarian-reform program. Civil

life in El Salvador in 1980 was a cauldron. In the first six months of that year military and paramilitary death squads had, according to the Archbishopric of San Salvador, assassinated nearly 3,000 political opponents, including Archbishop Oscar Romero. It was in this violent atmosphere that rumors about Dominguez began to circulate in San Salvador. It was said, falsely, that he had led a strike of campesinos against the Agricultural Minister; it was also whispered that Dominguez, a lifelong Christian Democrat, was involved with the guerrillas. On May 16 he was dismissed from his job. He told me, "One day before my assistant director and I were fired, we received letters describing how we would be executed. In July of 1980 I received five phone calls a day for fifteen days. The caller threatened me and my family because of our political views. This all happened because I had criticized the agrarian-reform process—particularly the militarization of expropriated lands. I had also criticized financial corruption that took place after the government set up a committee that had power to return expropriated lands to their former owners on an ad hoc basis."

Certain that if he didn't quit his homeland instantly, he'd be murdered, Dominguez bought plane tickets to New York for himself and his family. The American Ambassador, Robert White, a Carter appointee, was so concerned for Dominguez's safety that he personally arranged visas. In New York, soon after his arrival, Luis Dominguez wrote out an application for political asylum—one that was ultimately more than fifty pages long. Every detail of his nightmare was related. Substantiating reports from Amnesty International, affidavits from colleagues, and a letter from Ambassador White were included. The only item he did not send on to the Immigration and Naturalization Service was the actual note from the death squad. "You don't keep that sort of thing," he told me; his hands shook at the memory. Part of Dominguez's documentation was an affidavit from José Rodolfo Viera, the president of the Salvadoran Institute for Agrarian Transformation. Viera was subsequently murdered by a death squad as he ate lunch with two American co-workers in the San Salvador Sheraton.

For the next two years Luis Dominguez's asylum application wended its way through the complicated turns of INS asylum-adjudication machinery. By

administrative procedure, after a refugee makes application, he goes for an interview with an INS hearing officer. Then the State Department's Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs looks over his file, gives it to the desk officer for the country in question, and issues an advisory opinion on the claim. Ultimately the advisory opinion is sent back to the INS district director, who then makes his decision. Though it is not the final decision, the advisory opinion in effect adjudicates the claim—it is extremely rare that an INS district director overrules the State Department. As a draft paper of a 1982 internal INS report notes, when it comes to asylum adjudications, many officers of the INS believe that "the State Department 'calls the shots.'"

What the Department of State had to say about Luis Dominguez was that he had not proved "a well-founded fear of persecution." The news arrived in a form letter. Arthur Helton, Dominguez's attorney, remembers being shocked at the denial: "The decision was so unfair. What did it take to prove persecution? Did Dominguez need the actual physical note from the death squad? I had handled a lot of asylum cases, and I knew that Luis's only problem was *where* he came from."

Desperate, feeling that his client had nothing to lose, Helton had Dominguez go public with his story on the PBS program *Frontline*. The strategy worked. Shortly before the interview was to air, the Department of State asked to take a second look at Dominguez's file—and offered a reversal. "The Dominguez case taught me something big about the way the Reagan people were doing adjudications," Helton says. "Before Luis, I believed that a Salvadoran needed an absolutely perfect case to win. With Dominguez, I came to see that a Salvadoran needed a perfect case—plus an appearance on network television. Luis didn't submit anything new. His facts hadn't changed—but he'd become a political liability to them. The way the Reagan people do asylum adjudications, *everything* is political."

MAURICE INMAN was until recently the general counsel of the INS; he was still in office when I asked him about charges that the 1980 act is being implemented in a manner that reflects American foreign policy. "The decisions are nation-neutral," he said. "There's no partisanship involved at all. If someone

has a criticism against the system, it is that this Refugee Act of 1980 is a difficult act to satisfy, no matter where you come from. Listen, the Iranians get the most and we're not friendly with *anyone* in Iran!" Inman continued: "Somebody coming from Iceland could be persecuted to the same extent, or not be persecuted to the same extent, as somebody coming from Guatemala."

Exactly what happens to deportees when they are returned to Central America is a question under debate. If it could be proved that refugees are killed, imprisoned, or otherwise persecuted upon their return, then the United States would be guilty of *refoulement*, a practice banned by international law. Inman, in our conversation, denied that any refugees returning to El Salvador had been killed.

There have been several studies aimed at settling the *refoulement* issue, none of them particularly scientific, all of them conducted under the conditions of the Salvadoran civil war, and they are wildly contradictory. In 1984 the American Civil Liberties Union obtained from the INS a list of 8,500 people deported between March of 1981 and March of 1983. It was an incomplete list, with sometimes false or inadequate information, and to obtain it at all, the ACLU had to force a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit. Using a crude computer program, the ACLU attempted to match deportee names with the names of victims of political violence which had been provided to them by Salvadoran human-rights groups. "We identified a hundred and twelve likely cases of persecution—including fifty-two murders, forty-seven disappearances, thirteen unlawful political arrests," reports Wade J. Henderson, the associate director of the Washington office of the ACLU. "We think that with our crude methods, our lack of funding and staff, that we barely scratched the surface of the situation, but we were still extremely alarmed."

The Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM), however, an international humanitarian organization with a State Department contract, offers services to deportees, and keeps in touch with them after they've been returned to El Salvador. "We've greeted at San Salvador Airport six thousand three hundred and seventy-three returnees in a seventeen-month period," reports Gretchen Bolton, the chief of ICM's Washington office. "Most, according to

their interviews with us, say that they left for economic reasons. Only thirty-five returnees have ever said that they might face a security problem. We have not had word of any deaths due to deliberate government violence. We've collected the data on the returnees. We have been able to keep in touch with eighty-two percent of the group. Sometimes we were able to contact family or friends—the person having left for the U.S. again. Thirty percent had left for the U.S. or perhaps Mexico when we got in touch with them. Only one person has been killed in a vaguely political situation, and he was caught in crossfire between government troops and guerrillas."

The ICM data is frequently cited by Reagan Administration officials as documentary support for its policies. Advocates for the Central Americans charge that the data is faulty. The ACLU's Wade Henderson says, "How can we seriously be talking about a study done by ICM proving a lack of persecution? In El Salvador, ICM is viewed as an extension of the U.S. and Salvadoran governments authority, and their ability to get accurate and factual data from refugee through a questionnaire has to be challenged. If a deportee is asked a question by someone they view as a government official, they're never going to say, 'I'm afraid of the government. I've had trouble with the government.' Besides, no one with any smarts is going to return to ICM through the Salvadoran mails one of their little postcards that says, 'Yes, I am being persecuted.'"

Arthur Helton adds, "It's even not the point that persons who are deported from the U.S. are uniquely targeted for persecution—as the U.S. government says we say. The point is that there are ongoing human-rights violations in Central America, including classical persecution, that people are subjected to. Some of these people are entitled to political asylum if they manage to make their way here."

EVEN WITHIN THE Immigration Service strong criticism of asylum adjudications has occasionally surfaced. In 1982, for instance, the author of an internal INS draft study wrote:

For an El Salvadoran national to receive a favorable advisory opinion [from the State Department], he or she must have a "classic textbook case." On the other hand . . . a week after martial law was declared in Po-

land, seven Polish crewmen jumped ship and applied for asylum in Alaska. . . . All the applications, in the view of senior INS officials, were extremely weak. In one instance, the crewman said the reason he feared returning to Poland was that he had once attended a Solidarity rally (he was one of more than 100,000 participants at the rally). The crewman had never been a member of Solidarity, never participated in political activity, etc. His claim was approved within forty-eight hours.

When asked about this unpublished study, Maurice Inman countered, "What INS internal report? There was a draft submitted and it was rejected for being factually inaccurate. And therefore it never ascended to the status of 'an INS internal study.' It disappeared. It was totally inaccurate from top to bottom. The factual predicate of the conclusions was ridiculous. Our greatest criticism comes from those who think that granting asylum to thirty-five percent of the Poles is outrageously low. We get more criticism from people who think that ninety-five or a hundred percent of the Polish applicants are entitled to asylum. And that's where we have certain vulnerabilities."

It is to those vulnerabilities that the Reagan Administration seems most responsive. Last spring, the Refugee Act seemed to be coming apart at the seams—de facto and de jure. On March 30, 1986, a story in *The New York Times* indicated that Attorney General Edwin Meese, the ultimate boss of the Immigration Service, was having a memorandum drafted on the treatment of asylum claims from "totalitarian"—that is, Eastern-bloc—countries. Among other points made in this (unsigned) draft was this: "Polish nationals who are unwilling to return to Poland due to conditions there and who request or have requested political asylum or refugee status are presumed to be refugees within the meaning of the 1980 Refugee Act."

In other words, the Attorney General of the United States wanted the INS to disregard the nation-neutral wording of the 1980 act. The intention seemed to be that by fiat the country would return, more or less, to 1953. An unnamed Administration official quoted in the story—perhaps Meese himself—declared, regarding the implications for would-be refugees from other Communist countries, "We can't be lobbying for \$100 million in aid for the contras and deport-

ing people to Nicaragua at the same time."

In point of fact, the Nicaraguans weren't doing badly at all. Of those who applied for asylum in the first six months of last year, seventy percent succeeded—up from nine percent the previous year. And even nine percent was better than the Salvadorans have ever achieved. Perhaps encouraged by the Attorney General's initiative, on April 16 Perry Rivkind, the INS district director for Florida (the site of filing for three quarters of all Nicaraguan applicants), declared that, for his part, he was not going to deport *any* Nicaraguans to their home country. "I would personally—not just as a government official, but personally—have trouble sending people from a Communist country back to that country," he told *The New York Times*. "Morally and ethically it would be wrong to send people back to Nicaragua when we are at great odds with that government." The Justice Department, which oversees the INS, at first took the position that Rivkind had the legal right to issue the fiat. Only at the Department of State was there dissension. "We oppose Rivkind handing out blanket EVD's," Laura Dietrich said in an official dissent. In any case, Nicaraguan acceptances climbed noticeably in 1986.

When Congressman Peter Rodino, a Democrat from New Jersey and one of the fathers of the original reform legislation, heard about the blanket Nicaraguan acceptances, he expressed concern. "For some time I have been urging the Justice Department to halt the deportations of Haitians and Salvadorans because of the deplorable conditions in those countries," he said. "In my judgment, nationals of El Salvador and Haiti are deserving of relief, and it seems inconsistent to provide relief to Nicaraguans without providing identical treatment to Salvadorans and Haitians." Rodino was a sponsor of special legislation offering permanent residence to Haitians.

His proposed law—and similar efforts in behalf of Guatemalans by Congressmen Ted Weiss, a Democrat from New York, and Joe Moakley, a Democrat from Massachusetts—met with difficulties in Congress. In fact, last fall, when Congress passed a comprehensive new immigration law, an amendment to ban deportations of Salvadorans and Nicaraguans failed to survive a House-Senate conference committee. (President Reagan threatened to veto the en-

tire immigration law if it included such safe-haven provisions.) What ultimately was signed into law was a bill that will have a mixed effect on Central American refugees: the law provides for a general amnesty for all illegal aliens who entered the United States before October of 1982 and for others who have worked more recently as farm laborers—a benefit to those who fled during the harshest years of the Salvadoran and Guatemalan conflicts. Political violence in Central America, however, continues to this day.

Meanwhile, the 1980 Refugee Act remains a source of controversy. There are court cases currently pending that have the potential to set new precedents on the political-asylum issue. Last fall, for example, the Supreme Court heard a suit brought by Luz Marina Cardoza-Fonseca, a Nicaraguan seeking asylum in the United States, who argued that all she should need to prove is that she faced a reasonable possibility of persecution if returned to her home country. A decision is expected soon, and attorneys for the plaintiffs are optimistic. The Lawyers Committee for Human Rights filed an amicus curiae brief for Cardoza-Fonseca, as did the Washington office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees.

By last fall the process that had begun six years earlier, when Congress passed its originally non-controversial, nation-neutral law, had come full circle. In late October, Senator Arlen Specter, a Republican from Pennsylvania, made public the preliminary findings of a General Accounting Office study he had requested. The GAO compared asylum applications from the four most common countries of origin—Iran, Poland, Nicaragua, and El Salvador—which were decided in 1984. According to the study, "Approval rates for El Salvador (two percent) and Nicaragua (7 percent) were many times lower than approval rates from Poland (49 percent) and Iran (66 percent). The worldwide approval rate was 24 percent." Specter noted that in cases where the State Department's review was at variance with the INS's decisions, "Justice changed its original decision to agree with the State Department in 100 percent of the Salvadoran cases and 98 percent of the Nicaraguan cases. This indicates to me that these decisions are not being made on the basis of merit but on the basis of what is considered best for foreign policy."

—Claudia Dreifus

THE SHAME OF WANTING

BY BRIAN MCCORMICK



PENROY COULDN'T remember when he had not wanted something. He stood in the kitchen across from Tina, his best friend's wife, and he couldn't for the life of him remember.

"I've wanted you since last Christmas," Tina said, "when Bill brought you to that card game and you spilled mixed nuts on the rug."

"And then we cleaned it up together and my hand accidentally touched yours and there was that static spark from the rug." Penroy munched on a celery stalk. They couldn't touch. It was Bill's party, and Tina hadn't asked him for a divorce yet.

"Have you asked Bill for a divorce?"

"No. I couldn't. I meant to, but I couldn't."

"The shame?"

"The shame, the wanting, *everything*. But I will tomorrow. I'll ask tomorrow at breakfast."

"Tina," Penroy said, leaning close to her, feeling the heat of her face against his cheek, "I want the shame of wanting you."

"And I want you, baby, I really do, but the shame of wanting you makes me want Bill."

"Want Bill? You want the shame of wanting a husband who doesn't want you?"

"He wants me. He just doesn't want the shame of wanting me when I want the shame of wanting you."

"I thought we'd agreed that I wanted you more than you wanted Bill, and your shame in wanting me was less than your shame in staying with Bill."

"We did agree, but last night I realized that I want the shame of wanting you *and* the shame of wanting Bill, and then a little more wanting beyond that."

"*More* wanting. *More* wanting! You want more wanting than my wanting you?"

"Just a little more, not *much* more."

"But think of the shame of wanting more than the shame of wanting me and Bill."

Tina blushed and moved to the sink to avoid Penroy's look. "I want the shame of wanting, but I want wanting more than shame."

Penroy dropped the celery in the dip and turned Tina to face him. "There is no shame in wanting—there is only shame in *not* wanting."

"Don't you see?" Tina wiped away a tear with a damp dish towel. "I want *you* and the wanting of you!" Tina's face contorted as she nibbled at the peanut dip hanging from the end of her celery stalk. "Those people out there—Wendy and Donald and even Ted—they're our friends and they're wonderful. But they just . . . they just . . . they'll never . . . they'll never understand us or what it means to have what we have. They'll never understand the wanting and the shame and how we can *do* this, knowing Bill's going to die any day now."

"Any day now?" Penroy's hand stopped as he reached deep into the back of the refrigerator for the last beer.

"It's just a phrase, but that's what Doctor Boulder said when he drove me

back from the clinic yesterday. It could happen any day, and he said I was a good woman to be with him now that Bill can't—now that everything's gone out of the marriage like it has."

"Bill needs you. He told me that. But he needs to be forgotten, too. If he loved you, he would have let you go after he caught us kissing in the sauna."

"Damn!" Tina tipped her head the way she did when she was angry. "Damn him and damn you and *damn* the way he looks at me in the morning with those eyes that are so gray you'd think he was dead and gone already!"

Tina slapped at Penroy, missed, and slapped again—but her tears had made him a blur in the soft kitchen light.

"Stop it, stop it, stop it!" Penroy caught at her hands. "Don't you understand, I love you and need you, and *yes* they *won't* understand! They won't understand out there because they *can't* understand. They can't because they can admit to themselves that theirs is a life of death and parties, and *yes*, those parties are pretty damn good ones, and maybe we *won't* be invited after what happens, but it *has* happened, and it will continue to keep on happening until Bill stops needing you, when you don't need him anymore, because his is a life of death—death and parties!"

Penroy lifted the can to his mouth and the beer went down until he felt the cold in him, in his soul, in the kitchen in her and him and the kitchen.

"What if . . . what if we *helped* him. It's only fair, and he's going anyway."

Penroy felt ashamed of what he knew his mouth was saying, ashamed and a little bit proud, too. There was courage in their depravity. And suicide, well, that was too weak a word for love. It should be *euthanasia*.

"I'm still his wife. I can't. I'd like to help but I can't. I would, but I couldn't, so I can't, and besides, I wouldn't."

For the first time in his life Penroy felt like slapping a woman. "You mean you *won't*, because he won't let you! You won't because *they* wouldn't, all the Wendys and Donalds and even the Teds out there with their parties and slow death." For the first time, Penroy felt just a little bit free.

"Pass the peanut dip," he said.

Tina moved to touch his hand—moved but did not move.

"I *can't*," she said. "I can't."

Penroy saw that she couldn't, and felt something give way in himself, something far back in his mind, back where even his thoughts wouldn't go anymore.

He slapped her face, and knew he was lashing out at her fantastic obtuseness, her death, and her catered emotions. He lit a cigarette and watched the smoke pirouette around her face, half red with being slapped, half white with not.

"Try to understand," she said. "I want you, the shame of wanting, and the wanting of shame, but Bill *needs* more than you need. He needs at night, he needs at lunch, he needs, he needs, he *needs*."

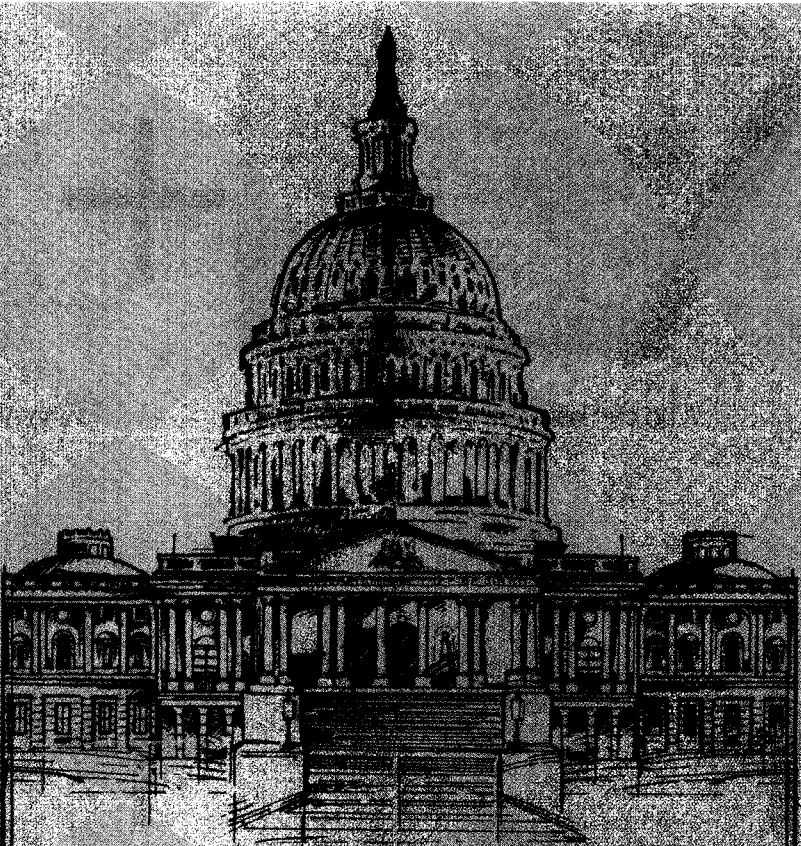
"But he doesn't need *you*, he just needs, and needing is dying. It's a party needing guests, guests with no party, and you've always wanted that, haven't you—to be a party with no guests. *Haven't you?*"

For the first time Penroy understood that he had never been a guest at Tina's parties, never been a guest at all—he and Bill and Wendy and Donald and, *yes*, even Ted. *They* had never been at Tina's parties at all. He put out his cigarette in the little crystal bowl of peanut dip.

"It's over, isn't it?" she said. "Just like that."

The door to the kitchen opened. Bill held a plate of celery stalks on his palm. He looked as new and innocent and foolish and dying as ever, standing there with his foot braced against the door, beer can in one hand, platter of celery in the other.

"Do you two want anything?" he said. "Or are you just going to stand there all night?" □



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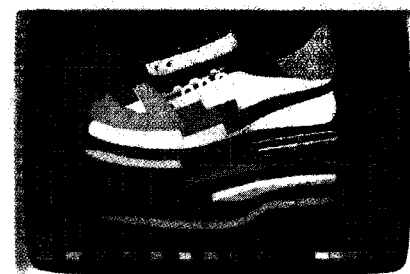
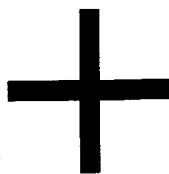
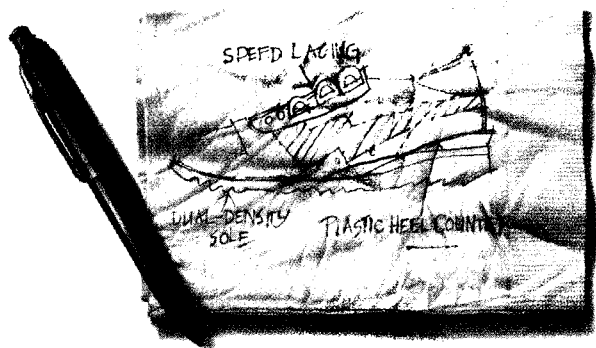
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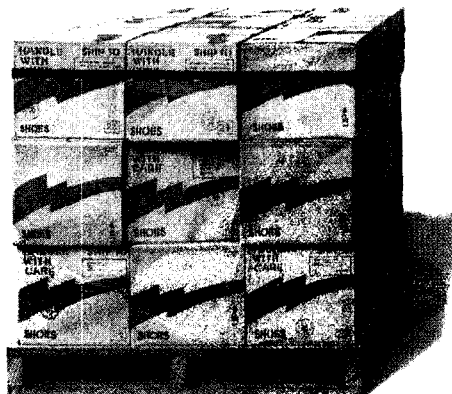
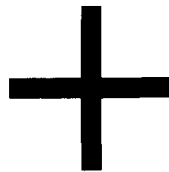
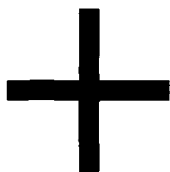
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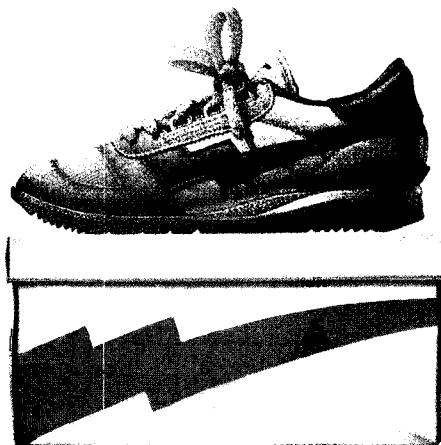
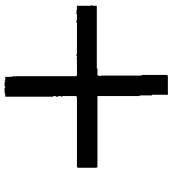
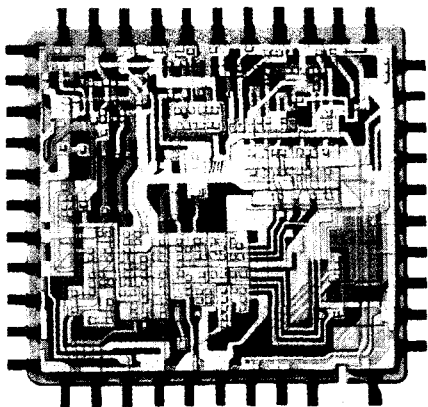
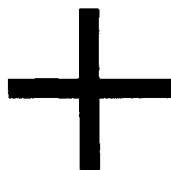
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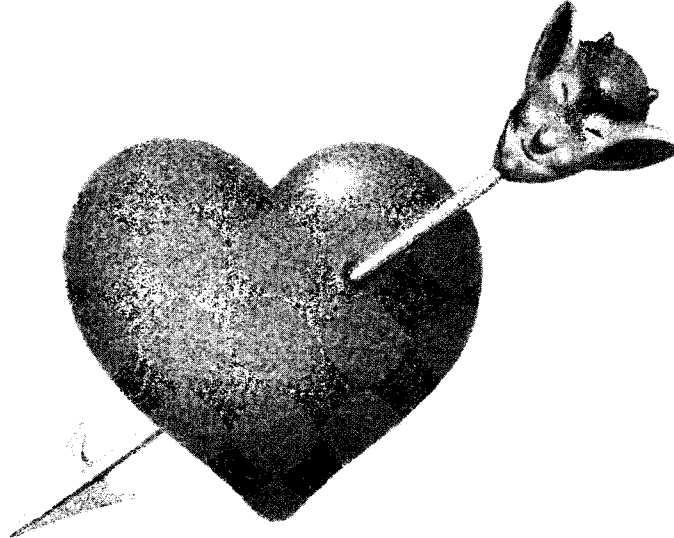
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The second stage of the epidemic

HETEROSEXUALS AND AIDS

BY KATIE LEISHMAN



LAST YEAR DR. THOMAS PETERMAN, OF THE CENTERS for Disease Control, in Atlanta, oversaw a study concerning transmission of HIV (human immunodeficiency virus), the principal AIDS virus, in families of persons with transfusion-associated infection. It was one of the first studies to assess the relative rates of sexual transmission from men to women and women to men. Not surprisingly, among people who did not have sex with infected partners there was no transmission. Among the sexually active couples, of the fifty men who were infected, eight transmitted the virus to their wives; of the twenty women, one transmitted the virus to her husband. It is of interest that the partners who became infected had all had only vaginal intercourse and reported fewer encounters after the transfusion than partners who did not become infected. One spouse became infected after only one exposure, another after eight. Obviously, the study documented that the disease was transmissible from men to women and women to men, but the varying rate of transmission provoked many questions. Do some men and women transmit the virus more efficiently? Or are some people more susceptible? Might someone have sex with a partner hundreds of times without transmission occurring, whereas the first time the infected person slept with someone else, transmission would occur?

The most important question, however, is one with which the study was not concerned, and it is a behavioral one, involving those couples who knew that one partner was infected. Why were any of these people—understanding that one could transmit a lethal virus to the other—

willing to have sex without a condom? There have since been other American studies of transmission rates between infected people, such as intravenous drug users and hemophiliacs, and their partners, which incidentally document a strange phenomenon: many people who know they are at extraordinarily high risk nevertheless dispense with even minimal precautions. Confronted with such data, health officials must blanch at the prospects for influencing the behavior of the millions of people who don't believe themselves to be at any risk of exposure at all.

To travel around this country talking to people about AIDS is to learn quickly that most Americans still regard the emergence of the disease, which struck gays first, as an act of God. Even many comparatively free thinkers take the attitude that liberal Democrats did as they watched the cast of Watergate characters come to trial: "I could have *told* you this was going to happen." These two notions have survived the introduction of undeniable evidence of heterosexual transmission. Many of the people who hold them continue to hang on news of every development related to AIDS. Everyone is waiting: waiting expectantly for news of a cure or a vaccine, although even the National Academy of Sciences, a circumspect group, has said that no vaccine will be available for at least five years; waiting in awful fascination for the news that the number of heterosexually transmitted cases has reached some critical point, whereupon men and women all across America will return to kissing their dates good-night at the door.

In the United States the number of reported domestic cases of heterosexually transmitted AIDS has increased by

over 200 percent in the past year (while cases among gay men and IV-drug users grew by 80 percent). But the total heterosexual caseload was still only 1,079 last December, or four percent of the 28,523 cases reported. It must be remembered, however, that these counts are of cases of AIDS in which infection occurred, on the average, five years ago. No one has any idea how many people are infected but asymptomatic, or how much transmission is going on. It has been estimated that in California there are sixty cases of AIDS for every reported one, and reporting is more complete in that state than anywhere else.

Women are generally believed to transmit the virus less efficiently than men—reported cases of AIDS transmitted from women to men in the United States represent less than eight percent of all heterosexually transmitted cases—but it remains unclear whether this is because men made up the overwhelming majority of infected people in the first round of the epidemic or because men inoculate their partners with a substantial dose of the virus and women do not. For unknown reasons heterosexual transmission appears to occur more easily with IV-drug use than with other risk factors: in a review last year of numerous reports of male-to-female transmission, transmission to partners of IV-drug users occurred in approximately 30 to 70 percent of the cases but to partners of hemophiliacs in only about 10 percent of the cases reviewed.

One cannot speak about transmission rates in the general public until a large pool of infected individuals has formed at one remove from the primary risk groups. That pool is forming now. Even if heterosexually transmitted cases continue to be a secondary feature of the epidemic in the United States, the crucial questions that men and women outside of monogamous relationships—and many people in them—must ask themselves are, Am I at any risk of exposure to the virus? and, more frightening, since ten years can pass before someone exhibits any visible sign of infection, Have I ever been exposed? Whether the risk is one in ten or one in ten thousand, the risk is there. Interviews with sexually active men and women across the country are reminiscent of discussions with openly gay men several years ago, when statistics related to AIDS infection in their communities were low but too significant to ignore. People perceive themselves to be immune and, moreover, possessed of an intuitive power that enables them to choose safe partners. The strength of that self-assurance varies, of course, and can assume as many forms as there are lovers at large.

Resistance to Change

EACH MONTH YIELDS NEW REVELATIONS FROM THE behavioral research related to AIDS, much of it coming out of San Francisco and almost all of it concerned with gays. Public-health officials around the country must assess that data, keeping certain questions in mind. How do people behave when they know they are infected or at risk? What is the value of AIDS education pro-

grams? What impact does the discovery of one's antibody status, or of a partner's antibody status, really have? Is it easier to affect the behavior of people for whom the risk of exposure can be reasonably estimated than it is to affect those for whom it cannot be? Finally, to what extent can the behavior and attitudes of homosexuals be related to those of heterosexuals? Many people believe that the intensity or quality of homosexual drives is unique, while others argue that the ability to control sexual impulses varies extraordinarily within groups of any sexual preference. Much about the epidemic already suggests that ironclad distinctions between gays and straights serve no one and may cost some people their lives.

The investigation of why people respond differently to the same information about health has become one branch of epidemiology, the study of the occurrence of disease and the factors responsible for its frequency and distribution. Behavioral epidemiology, the study of the relationship between behavior and disease, is less than forty years old and is still controversial.

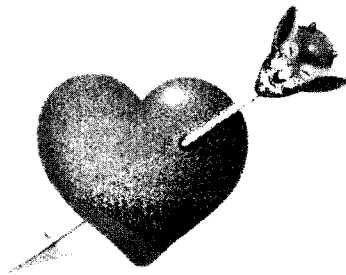
One of its first applications was the development of programs for disease prevention, as opposed to a single-minded search for cures. These programs first gained national attention with the 1964 Surgeon General's report on the dangers of smoking. The government launched mass-immunization campaigns for polio and influenza throughout the sixties and an education program about high blood pressure, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health in the seventies. The concept of behavioral control over health now seems a commonplace. Nonetheless, any decision to devote public funds to health education rather than research is controversial, because evidence that people are willing to change their behavior remains unconvincing. AIDS may provide the ultimate test of strategies for behavior modification.

For almost thirty years studies have been compiled on the subject of decision-making related to health. Some of the earliest research was based on interviews with citizens concerning their attitudes toward participation in an x-ray screening program for tuberculosis conducted by what is now the American Lung Association. After reviewing the data Dr. Godfrey Hochbaum, at the School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina, in 1956 devised a theory of four critical health beliefs that individually or in combination may lead someone to alter his behavior: the belief in susceptibility (which young people are notoriously unable to entertain), the belief in the severity of the outcome, the belief that one can have something and not know it, and the belief that the action that has been recommended will achieve the desired end.

What Hochbaum determined to be the critical factor in people's decision to be x-rayed was their belief that they could have something and not know it. Similar findings emerged in studies of participants in the NIH's high blood-pressure programs. "The greatest barrier to action is the absence of symptoms," says Dr. Lawrence Green, the director of the Health Science Center at the University of

Texas at Houston. "Someone tells himself, 'If I have high blood pressure, I should have a headache.' Once people are persuaded they may have something and not know about it, you have to be able to assure them you can offer them help if they take steps to find out they do have something." That assurance can hardly be offered regarding AIDS—a lethal disease for which the true incubation period is unknown and for which there is no cure.

AIDS as it relates to heterosexuals presents an additional problem for behavioral-modification theorists: the risk cannot be defined. In general, the higher the degree of risk that can be projected for a particular individual, the easier it is to affect his behavior. The perception of a high risk and a catastrophic outcome combined might be expected to induce the greatest motivation to change, while a low risk and a negligible outcome should have little impact. When the perceived risk involved is as low as it is for most heterosexuals thinking about AIDS, the perceived severity of the outcome may not matter. According to Green, people can take probability into account "as long as it is in their own betting experience—anything per ten or hundred." He adds, "But once you are into the thousands, it doesn't make much difference if it is one in one thousand or one in ten thousand. Most people can't relate to it, and it is easy for denial to take over. For those people who do perceive a risk at those levels, it will be a go or no-go decision to change."



Condoms: Prophylaxis Revisited

"CHANGE" IN THE MINDS OF MOST HETEROSEXUALS well informed about AIDS means one thing: the use of condoms. Condoms have become the talisman against AIDS, recommended for use in oral sex as in any other kind, because of the possibility that pre-ejaculatory emissions are sufficient to transmit the virus and the certainty that ejaculate is. A study reported last spring in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* showed that in laboratory tests HIV cannot pass through either a synthetic or a natural-skin (usually made from lambs' intestinal linings) condom. (Many experts believe, however, that natural-skin condoms are more porous and therefore offer less-effective protection.) Readers were quick to point out in letters that condoms, which can break, leak, or be used improperly, are associated with an annual 10 percent failure rate in pregnancy prevention—and a woman is fertile only a few days a month, whereas a person with the AIDS virus always has it. Moreover, there was no proof that ho-

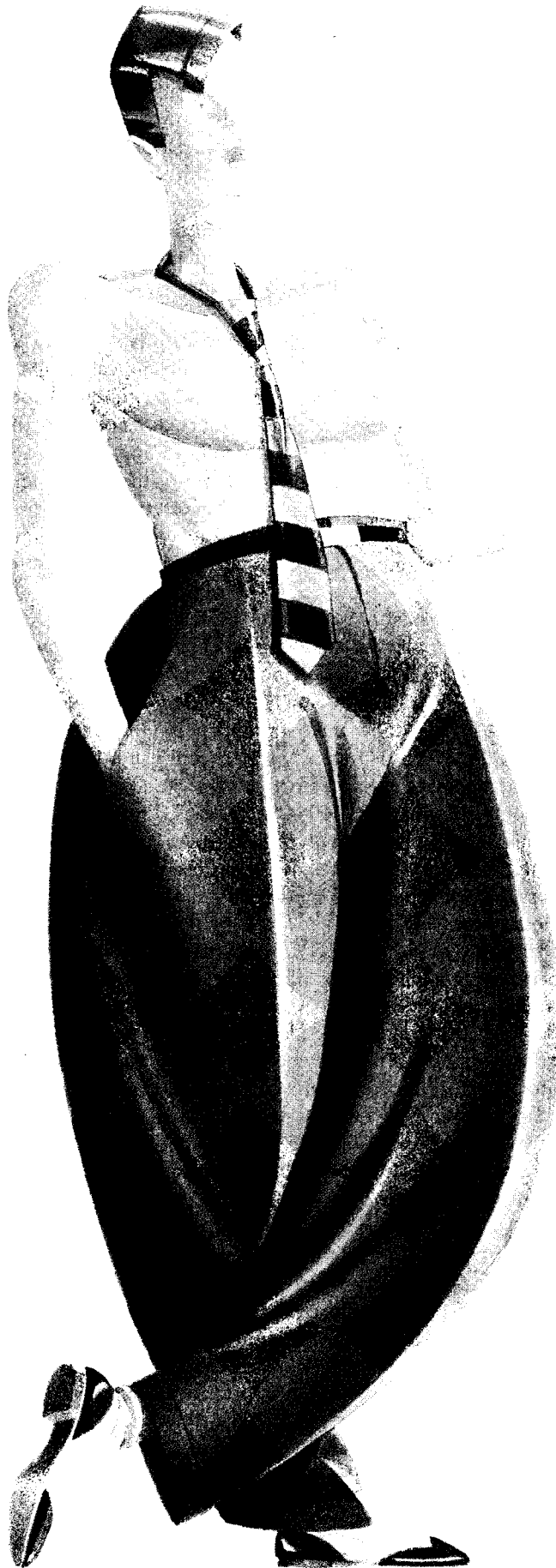
mosexuals were more motivated to use condoms for prophylaxis, let alone use them correctly, than heterosexuals were to use them for birth control. One of the study's authors, Dr. Marcus Conant, who is the chairman of the California State Department of Health Task Force on AIDS, not only concedes these problems but also adds that laboratory conditions don't necessarily duplicate the stresses brought to bear on condoms during sex. The same limitations apply to studies concerning the effectiveness against HIV of nonoxynol-9, the spermicide in most contraceptive gels and foams, and the only spermicide considered to have any value in repelling the AIDS virus.

Not long after the *JAMA* exchange a study was released by Dr. Margaret Fischl, the director of clinical AIDS research at the University of Miami. Among a group of twenty-eight AIDS patients whose partners did not have the AIDS antibody, sixteen continued to have unprotected sex with their steady partners during a one-to-three-year period; thirteen of their partners seroconverted (became antibody-positive). Twelve of the patients continued to have sex but used condoms. Two of their partners also seroconverted.

Obviously, condoms are a lot better than nothing. Yet knowing this may not have great impact. In a follow-up note to the *JAMA* article, Conant cited one study of gay men in San Francisco in which 80 percent of the men indicated that they knew that condoms helped prevent transmission of the virus but only six percent used them.

The behavior of San Francisco's gay men has been carefully monitored since 1984 in the San Francisco Men's Health Study, which involves 1,000 gay and bisexual men. The results of the study have been used to celebrate the possibility for behavior modification, but they deserve a closer look. From 1984 to 1986 men reported dramatic changes in sexual activity related to the number of their partners and the practice of passive and active anal intercourse; the annual seroconversion rate dropped from 20 percent to five percent. That is welcome news. Yet one may extrapolate a five-percent seroconversion rate to other previously uninfected men: 1,000 men seroconverted last year alone in San Francisco, which means eventually at least 315 new cases of AIDS. This number is disturbing in a community already profoundly stricken—and it is certainly an optimistic projection, because men conscientious enough to participate in an ongoing health study are not representative. So-called cohort bias is a continual problem with such AIDS surveys. Dr. Constance Wofsy, an infectious-disease specialist at San Francisco General Hospital and an authority on AIDS, summarizes her impressions of the response of the city's gay community to the AIDS crisis: "With intense education efforts and extraordinary motivation you can affect the behavior of some people—in most cases only temporarily."

The preliminary data about the behavior of heterosexuals regarding AIDS is hardly more encouraging. In addition to the CDC study conducted by Dr. Peterman, there are numerous others concerning partners of infected per-



sons—hemophiliacs who received infected plasma, IV-drug users, recipients of contaminated transfusions—in which couples go on month after month having unprotected sex. Moreover, study subjects are not alone in carrying an attitude of “We’re in this thing together” to death-defying extremes—if that is, in fact, what they are thinking. Public-health directors and AIDS doctors all over the country tell stories of reckless behavior. Rick Reich, the AIDS-services coordinator for the Health District of Clark County, Nevada, regularly counsels many couples in which one member is antibody-positive. He sees one couple—the man is antibody-positive, his wife negative—who, without



using condoms, average fifteen sexual encounters a week. “with no particular bias as to orifice,” Reich says. Another couple was sent to him two years ago, shortly after the birth of their child. Soon after the baby was born, the man, who had engaged in unspecified high-risk activity several years earlier, came down with persistent pneumonia and went in for the AIDS antibody test. The pneumonia proved to be a simple case, but he tested positive. His wife was tested and was positive; the baby tested antibody-negative. (It was unclear whether his wife had been positive before the child’s birth.) The couple continued to have unprotected sex, knowing that both of them were positive and that repeated exposure might increase the chance that one or both of them would contract full-blown AIDS. Last year the woman decided that she wanted another child and became pregnant, against the advice of physicians and health officials who warned her of the serious probability that the child would be infected and die. Everyone concerned anxiously awaits the birth. This couple cannot be regarded as a rarity. Preliminary findings at major hospitals in poor urban sections of the New York metropolitan area indicate a rate of seropositivity of two percent or higher among pregnant women, and not all of them could have been ignorant of their own antibody status prior to conception.

Such accounts challenge the claims that sexual conservatism has swept the country in response to AIDS. In one study that is frequently cited, a behavioral psychologist interviewed 2,600 college students nationwide. Compared with students of twenty years ago, fewer approved of one night stands (19 percent approved, as opposed to 48 percent in an earlier study). That may well be what many men and women are saying. But on any Saturday night in any city the bars are packed, and it is hard to believe that all

these people are getting together to drink themselves under the table.

Optimists have cited the decline of certain sexually transmitted diseases, in particular syphilis and gonorrhea. But it is a mistake to infer the potential for HIV transmission from incidence rates of these diseases, which differ in character and degree of transmissibility. With syphilis and gonorrhea, the period of highest infectiousness occurs for several weeks after initial infection and then declines dramatically. Someone with a syphilitic lesion might cut back from four partners a month to two partners, and in skipping sex for two weeks be abstinent right through the

phase of highest infectiousness. Someone with HIV might similarly reduce his sexual activity but would remain infectious before, during, and after a spell of abstinence.

According to a growing number of AIDS authorities, the disease to watch instead is hepatitis B, a viral liver ailment whose transmission patterns are all but identical to those of AIDS: it is transmitted through blood, semen, and contaminated needles, and, like AIDS, is associated with a large pool of asymptomatic carriers. In the United States it is most common in gay men, and can be passed from an infected mother to her newborn child. Because the incubation period for hepatitis B is only two to four months, the incidence of recorded cases may be used as an index for the potential for ongoing transmission of HIV.

In 1975 the Minnesota Department of Health began collecting data on all new reported cases of hepatitis B. From 1982—the year in which the first case of AIDS was reported in the state—to the present, every six-month period has brought the same number of new clinical cases of hepatitis B in gay and bisexual men, although the same four-year period saw a 70 percent decline in the rate of syphilis. A recent study at a San Francisco clinic similarly showed an overall decline of 70 percent in rectal gonorrhea from 1980 to 1985—but in a group studied at the same clinic during the same period the percentage of seropositivity for AIDS rose from 12 to 67 percent.

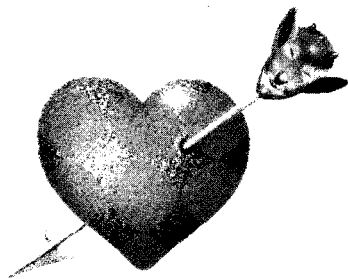
The studies suggest that although reduction of sexual activity affects the incidence of sexually transmitted bacterial diseases, it does not have an impact on the concurrent incidence of the viral infections hepatitis B and HIV. Moreover, given the alarming accounts of hepatitis B and HIV contracted after a single encounter, it may well be that hepatitis and HIV are more readily transmissible than



either gonorrhea or syphilis. (For gonorrhea the probability of transmission is about fifty-fifty in a single encounter with an infectious partner; for syphilis, even when a person still has a lesion, it is less than 20 percent.) Studies of hospital workers stuck with contaminated needles while treating patients with hepatitis B and HIV have been used to suggest that hepatitis is much more easily transmitted than HIV, but these studies cover only transmission by blood. It appears that sexual transmission occurs as easily for HIV as it does for hepatitis B. There are documented cases in which hepatitis B has been transmitted by oral sex alone from men to men.

Many people believe that they can cut in half their risk of exposure to AIDS by cutting in half the number of their partners. This is probably not true for people with a great many partners. Last September an article titled "Hepatitis B Virus Transmission Between Heterosexuals" was published by the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. The authors studied patients at a sexually-transmitted-disease clinic and students at a large university, and were careful to exclude all risk factors for hepatitis B transmission except sexual activity. Their findings suggested that although risk of infection increased with sexual activity, it increased in a nonlinear way. In fact, there appeared to be a quantum dynamic at work. Among the students the prevalence of hepatitis B infection was 1.5 percent for those with fewer than three recent partners and 14 percent for those with three or more recent partners. For the patients at the clinic the risk of exposure to hepatitis B was the same whether the number of lifetime partners was one to twenty-four or twenty-five to forty-nine—but for someone with fifty or more lifetime sexual partners the risk suddenly quadrupled.

Because the sexual transmission of hepatitis B and of AIDS are so similar, the implications of this study are especially discouraging. And while hepatitis B kills only one percent of the 25,000 people who are reported as having contracted it each year, 30 percent of those who have contracted AIDS have died already and the number is continually being adjusted upward.



Intellectualized Fear

THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO WORRY WITH SEEMINGLY little to worry about and people who don't worry who seemingly ought to. Only rarely does one find people so worried that they have changed their behavior. And these people—in particular, uninfected heterosexuals

who have stopped having casual sex because of AIDS—very often deprecate themselves, describing themselves as hypochondriacal, irrational, paranoid, or neurotic. There is no question that AIDS provides a good excuse for men and women who were afraid to enter relationships anyway. And people who worry obsessively about germs now feel vindicated. But the number of people making real changes seems slight, even in places where information about AIDS is readily available.

Last summer the San Francisco AIDS Foundation conducted a telephone survey of 400 randomly selected heterosexuals, 60 percent men and 40 percent women, one third minority, two thirds white. The subjects were asked to evaluate, on a scale of one to ten, how much impact AIDS had had on their sexual behavior. The mean response was four. Thirty-three percent said that AIDS had had no impact; 35 percent gave responses from two to five. Two thirds of respondents, then, rated the impact at five or below. Respondents were asked what types of people they believed to be at risk for getting AIDS. In San Francisco, with the largest per capita rate of AIDS in the country at the time, only seven percent of those surveyed said that sexual partners of people in risk groups were at risk.

Respondents were asked whether they had considered taking the antibody test, which has received enormous publicity in San Francisco. Five percent had taken the test and 31 percent didn't know it existed. Of those who knew of the test but hadn't taken it, 22 percent said they might, and 77 percent thought it was unlikely that they would.

This first statistic is perhaps the most interesting. A growing number of sexually active heterosexuals, especially in cities with a substantial caseload of AIDS patients, are considering taking the test. Most states have test sites, partly subsidized by the federal government, where the test is administered at no cost and sometimes anonymously. (Health clinics usually charge between \$80 and \$100, and at a private physician's office the fee can be as high as \$300.) Perhaps straight men and women are willing to take the test because they do not have the strong reasons to fear that they are positive that many gays do, and because they are less concerned about confidentiality and civil-rights discrimination than are gays. In the New York City metropolitan area, where by the most conservative estimates of the health commissioner 500,000 people are infected, it is not unusual to find in one office several people who have considered taking the test and one person who already has taken it.

In one such office, a law firm in Newark, a thirty-two-year-old attorney was working one afternoon when a friend, a partner in the firm who is known to sleep with many women, came in and sat down, white as a sheet. "Did you hear National Public Radio last night?" he asked. "The World Health Organization has written off—completely written off—four central African countries because the level of AIDS infection is so high."

"Don't tell me about Africa," she said. "What are *you* doing?"

Like many well-educated professionals who are sexually active, the man had become an AIDS encyclopedia without changing his habits. He knew the public-health budgets of several nations around Lake Victoria, the seropositivity rate among newborns there, and the results of every study of hepatitis among gay men in New York during the early 1980s. He had started to worry about AIDS a year before and had become really worried after a discussion with some old friends several months earlier.

"I don't usually discuss sex with other men," he said later, "but somehow we got to talking about how many women we'd slept with in the past ten years. I went first and said, 'Oh, about three hundred,' thinking that was perfectly normal. I was appalled when the other men spoke up and the closest anyone else came to that number was about thirty. I didn't know I was an aberration.

"This advice 'Know your partner' is just ridiculous. The idea that, given the incubation period for the virus, you might have to think back seven or eight years—that terrifies me. I don't know the people I slept with then. In fact, I didn't know them when I was sleeping with them. I started doing some geometric progressions and figured out that I'd been exposed to tens of thousands of people.

"My fear is intellectual, though. It doesn't translate into my daily life. I have talked about AIDS with my current partner, whom I've seen for about two years. I have thought how wonderful it would be to know for sure you were antibody-negative and then be strictly monogamous with someone else who was and who you could trust to be faithful. I guess they used to call that marriage. In essence she and I do have a kind of pact. ["In essence" meant, it turned out, that he averaged one sexual encounter a week outside the relationship, often with one of the women he already knew.] She and I discussed the possibility of our both taking the test, and rejected it for the obvious reason: one of us might not be negative, which would immediately end the relationship right there.

"For me, knowing the results of the test would only be good if it told me I was negative. I am very frightened of the social aspect of the disease. The curtailment of sex would be the least of my concerns. I am more moved by affection than by sex. What I couldn't stand to lose would be the sense of connection, other people's good opinion of me. I'm afraid if I found out I was positive, I wouldn't want to go on living. I just can't take rejection. In this case ignorance is bliss, although you can't allow ignorance to create a danger for someone else. So I know what I have to do: use condoms. Have I done it? No." (For all that he knew about AIDS, he did not know that a person could be infectious and have no visible symptoms, or that condoms were recommended for oral as well as vaginal sex.)

His colleague in the office planned to take the antibody test. When she called her doctor's office for an appointment, the nurse said disgustedly, "You don't have AIDS. Don't worry about it." For two years the woman had dated a man who, she believes, was bisexual. Now she is planning to donate blood in order to ascertain her antibody sta-

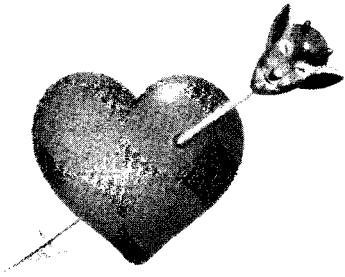
tus—an option many people hesitate to pursue, because it takes much longer to learn results and cases of seropositivity are often reportable to state departments of health.

These two attorneys often work with a fifty-four-year-old insurance-claims investigator. He has already taken the antibody test. He got married in 1973, but in 1985 he and his wife separated for eight months, during which time he had a girl friend and occasionally engaged in swinger group sex, which he had practiced regularly throughout the sixties and early seventies. The man tested negative. "If I had tested positive, I wouldn't have known how to conduct myself around my children," he says. There is so much the doctors don't know about contagion. These swingers, they're mostly professionals, and they think the scene is safe. They're just kidding themselves."

The magazines in which swingers advertise their charms and through which they make contact with each other are now full of assurances that the people in the photographs are "squeaky clean." The presidents of several swinger clubs around the country insist that swingers are more conscious of hygiene and disease than the average crowd at any singles bar, and that they are pre-screened in a way that isn't possible at, for example, a disco. "Everyone who calls me asks about AIDS," says the president of a 400-member club in Chicago. "I tell them I'm not a doctor. I can't screen people physically, but I can psychologically. I ask someone who wants to apply about their family background. I check out the way they dress, their educational level, their profession, and the rest."

"No one has taken the blood test in the group," he says. "There has been no discussion of using condoms. Definitely, there has been a greater tendency toward oral sex lately, and anal sex was eliminated without anyone having to mention a word. I would say about twenty percent of the men are bisexual and seventy-five percent of the women. I noticed that people have been avoiding the bisexual men recently. Everyone is questioning their swing partners more carefully, but no one is overly concerned. In five years we have had no major health problems." Such claims notwithstanding, reported outbreaks of sexually transmitted diseases in swing clubs in Minnesota recently led to a CDC study. One hundred and thirty-four members (seventy-five men and fifty-nine women) of swing clubs in the Twin Cities volunteered to be tested for HIV. None of the men but two of the women were positive.

Many single men and women across the country describe a kind of radar that they think they have for safe or clean partners. The word *picky* comes up a lot. These people say that they know just what questions to ask at a first encounter. Quite often the accounts that they give of their own amorous histories do not jibe with reports from close friends and ex-lovers, especially concerning the number of partners the people reporting have had, which they underestimate. William Darrow, a research sociologist at the CDC, says, "If I've learned one thing in twenty-five years of this work, it is that people's anecdotal accounts of their sexual experiences aren't worth much."



Hookers and Johns: The Feeling Is Mutual

AIDS IS ONLY BEGINNING TO SUGGEST TO HETEROSEXUALS a perception that is now sadly familiar to gay men: any new lover is a potential perpetrator. That fear finds its collective expression in the panic surrounding prostitutes. In every city, when AIDS is first perceived as a local problem that has come to stay, a story about prostitutes makes headlines. This usually concerns an antibody-positive woman who persists in conducting business, or the issue of mandatory blood tests for all arrested prostitutes.

Since the first European epidemic of syphilis, in the sixteenth century, every major outbreak of venereal disease has precipitated intense concern about prostitutes and the need for regulation, usually for purposes of medical inspection. In the nineteenth century, as the horrors of congenital syphilis became better understood, the campaign against prostitutes acquired the urgency of a drive to prevent infection of innocent wives and children. The degree of concern was appropriate: prostitutes were unquestionably the primary source of trouble.

Matters have never been as simple since, as is explained in *Women and Prostitution*, by Vern and Bonnie Bullough, the deans respectively of the schools of natural and social sciences and nursing at the State University of New York at Buffalo. In the Bulloughs' account recent outbreaks of venereal disease have had less to do with prostitutes than with the sexual freedom of women, the abandonment of the use of condoms, and the knowledge that antibiotics usually mean a certain cure for most venereal diseases. One group that has continued to rely on condoms for prophylaxis is prostitutes. It is not at all clear that a man is at greater risk having vaginal sex with a prostitute while using a condom than he would be having vaginal or anal sex with a woman he picks up at a bar, without using a condom. It is almost as if the obsessive fear of prostitutes reflected a romantic wishfulness for an earlier time when the danger was as easily identified as the red-light district. In fact prostitutes who are not drug users may have at least as much to fear from their customers as their customers do from them.

Mandatory testing of arraigned prostitutes has become a controversial issue for health and law-enforcement officials. "Why should we use taxpayers' money for the test, which is expensive?" asks Robert Landreth, the chief of the vice and narcotics division of the Las Vegas police department. "We're just making it easier for these men. The woman will just take the papers and wave them in some

new customer's face to show she's negative, or was. Everybody should assume there's a risk. In Las Vegas most of the girls and their pimps are on hard drugs. Lots of them are bisexual. So are lots of the customers—which makes me worry about the secretaries from Los Angeles who come up for the weekend and decide they want to pay for their trip back by picking up a guy."

Dr. Joyce Wallace, the president of the Foundation for Research on Sexually Transmitted Disease, in New York, has recently undertaken a study of clients of prostitutes. Of the 101 men in her study three have tested positive. One of the three reported more than 2,200 sexual contacts, and after four interviews finally said that he had once been the receptive partner in anal sex. ("In my experience," she says, "many men will say they've had sex with a dog before they'll admit to having had sex with another man.") Another reported more than a thousand contacts and admitted to having had sex with a man "once, in an orgy setting." Wallace is skeptical of the third man's claim to be free of risk factors other than frequent sex with prostitutes.

The real problem among prostitutes is IV-drug use. Wallace estimates that a man has a fifty-fifty chance of exposure to the virus in an unprotected encounter with a prostitute who is an IV-drug user. And it is the addict who is most likely to forgo a condom for a few extra dollars. Last year Wallace studied 100 prostitutes who were former drug users. She found that if a woman had quit using drugs before 1977, there was a 16 percent chance she would test antibody-positive; if she had quit from 1983 to 1985, there was a 64 percent chance. In a more recent study, of high-priced call girls, only one tested positive, and she was a former IV-drug user.

This second study seemed uncannily to answer the question of countless men who use prostitutes: If I pay enough, can I be sure she's safe? It is a question overheard frequently these days by a men's-locker-room attendant at a casino-hotel in Las Vegas. "The customers come for gambling and girls like they always did," he says. "AIDS hasn't stopped them from coming, but man, you can tell they are afraid of the women. There is a lot of talk about finding 'high-class' hookers, no matter what they cost, if they know they are clean. You know, I have one old customer who's been coming for years. He won't use our plastic slippers anymore—he brings his own—and he won't use the whirlpool and sauna, but he's still screwing around, saying he'll pay a hundred more if a girl is clean. It is a kind of Russian roulette about AIDS. They're all screwing around, but if a man who even looks effeminate walks into the locker room, everybody tries to walk all the way around him."

The old stereotypes of johns—husbands seeking relief once the family is big enough, traveling businessmen, people with sexual fetishes, servicemen, men eager to enjoy sexual practices supposedly objectionable to their wives—are still valid. But prostitutes and brothel operators describe a new phenomenon: young professionals who don't want to take time away from their budding careers to

cultivate serious relationships but who want to let off some sexual tension once a week or so. Many of the young customers are precisely the same men who on other nights frequent yuppie singles bars. A thirty-four-year-old salesman who divides his time between Manhattan and Mexico City says, "I'd much rather pick up a woman in a bar than see a prostitute, but in a bar my average is one in ten. With a prostitute, if you have the money, you're on—and you can look like the devil that night."

In *Women and Prostitution* the Bulloughs write that historically, when epidemics of venereal disease occur, prostitutes' business may decline in hard-hit cities, but it usually picks up again when the first panic subsides, while remaining unaffected in other places. Reports around the country confirm that pattern in the midst of the AIDS epidemic. Business is still what it was in most cities.

Any reports of a drastic falloff in business come, unsurprisingly, from New York and San Francisco, and may or may not portend a recession in the trade elsewhere. The accounts by hookers there concerning their remaining customers suggest that many of the people most in need of information about AIDS are the last ones to get it.

Donna is a twenty-eight-year-old who lives in the San Francisco Bay area. She left prostitution for cosmetology last year, because she was afraid of AIDS and because it had affected business, which she says had decreased by 90 percent from two years before. "I had always been careful and used condoms for intercourse," she says. "In 1983 I started using them for blow jobs and stopped performing anal sex. I was nervous about some of the customers and tried to ask them if they had ever slept with another man, but many of them seemed ashamed by the question or would evade it. I just never felt like I knew."

"At the same time I was getting more careful, so were some of the customers. Even men who had been coming for five or six years just wanted a hand job. Well, the fee for a hand job is twenty dollars, as opposed to a hundred dollars for intercourse. I tried telling a few customers there would still be a hundred-dollar minimum, but they said, 'No way.' Sometimes a guy showed up who wanted to get laid but could only afford forty or fifty dollars. A year earlier I would have sent them away, but I needed the money so badly I took it. The poorer customers were less aware of AIDS. Some didn't even know the problem existed."

Two years ago Donna worked with one other prostitute in a house in Berkeley, where, although she had dropped her rates, she watched the number of customers drop from an average of twenty-five a day to five. "Also, I used to get a lot of couples, three to four a night. Usually they had taken drugs and wanted a little excitement. That business dried up completely. From 1979 to 1983 I had averaged between five hundred and seven hundred dollars a day. Last year I was lucky to make a hundred a day. I never stopped worrying about getting AIDS; I really thought I was going to die from it. When the blood test became available, I took it. Negative."

Donna went to New York to see if business would be any better. The competition there was even worse, and she didn't earn her plane fare back to California. "When I got home, I knew I wanted out, and I quit on New Year's Eve. A lot of women would like to get out of the business but can't do anything else. They can't even support their pimps anymore, and they are getting their asses kicked. If a woman wants a piece of what action is left, she is going to have to give a lot more emotionally than many prostitutes like to do. Women have to be more heartfelt, more giving, they have to get interested in the man, really think about what they are doing. You practically have to kiss somebody's feet to get them to come back."

It is hard to imagine a place where AIDS might be a boon for prostitution, but it exists. In the Nevada desert, about sixty miles outside Las Vegas, Cadillacs and pickup trucks are lined up every day outside the Chicken Ranch brothel while customers wait in the parlor, on red-and-gilt sofas covered with plastic. The Chicken Ranch is one of the legendary whorehouses in Nye County, where prostitution is legal, as it is in all but five counties in Nevada. At the brothels women have regular weekly medical inspections and are tested for HIV once a month. The discovery that a woman is using drugs means immediate firing.

About a year ago Russ Reade, the owner of the Chicken Ranch, initiated a novel house rule: customers must use condoms for all sex acts. Prostitutes were soon calling from all over the country looking for a job. Needless to say, the idea didn't catch on as quickly with clients.

"It was the toughest business decision I ever made," says Reade, a former biology and sex-education teacher from California. "I walk fifteen to twenty-five customers out the door every week, usually a hardhat who says, 'I'd rather die than use a rubber.' The customers who walk out are usually from lower socioeconomic groups, which just reflects the different level of educational awareness. It is like watching the money walk out. But in the past few months I've concluded that my business has started to increase since AIDS—men feel safer here—so it all balances out. Some customers want to see paper proof of a woman's recent antibody-test results. Now between twenty-five and thirty percent of the customers call beforehand and ask if there are condoms available or if they should bring their own. Another brothel in the area, The Cherry Patch, is considering following our example."

"More and more of the men are asking for just hand jobs. They want the girls to do little dances for them or fantasy plays. They want to masturbate themselves watching a girl perform a show. I've had groups of men come in, and when one guy's turn comes up, he'll go in and give the girl a hundred and fifty dollars, saying, 'I don't want to do anything, but don't tell the other guys.' It is all AIDS, AIDS, AIDS."

Describing the changes in business recently, Reade says, "It is clearer to me than ever before that men may think they see prostitutes for sex, but that isn't really the issue. They come for companionship."

Bisexuals: Is He or Isn't He?

EACH NEW STUDY, IT SEEMS, FORCES OBSERVERS TO discard one more supposition about sexual practices in this country. Public-health officials and private AIDS physicians around the country are struck by the presence of three different clinical subpopulations: Catholic priests; married gay men who do not want their spouses to know when they learn they are antibody-positive; and single, active bisexuals.

Health officials who deal with sexually transmitted diseases have long been aware of the frequency of homosexuality among Catholic priests. In the words of one such official, "I and most of the public-health directors I've talked to about this subject estimate that in our communities at least a third of Catholic priests under forty-five are homosexuals, and most are sexually active. They almost always engage in anonymous encounters, the highest-risk sex of all, and when they want help they don't come to clinics. I've met with priests in some of the strangest places." A county health department worker tells of going to a bathhouse to conduct syphilis testing and catching sight of the priest who had given prenuptial counseling to him and his fiancée. "He was slapping on a towel when I walked in," the man says. "I pretended not to see him, and I think he did the same. Later I discussed it with my wife. To my surprise she didn't seem that upset. To her it seemed less like a violation of his vows than if he'd been having an affair with a woman in the parish. Bathhouse sex wasn't going to lead to a relationship." Even as the Church is toughening its stance on homosexuality, more and more priests are dying of AIDS. The official ticks off the most recent AIDS casualties that he has heard of among priests—one in New York; two in San Francisco, two in his own city, and a bishop in a nearby community; the obituary usually attributes the cause of death to some other illness, generally cancer. It seems only a matter of time before the situation will compel some acknowledgment from the Church of a reality it has chosen to ignore.

The potential role of bisexuals in heterosexual transmission of AIDS has been gravely underestimated. In the San Francisco AIDS Foundation survey of 400 heterosexuals, seven percent of the women thought that their primary partner had had sex with another man within the past five years, and twelve percent of the men thought that their female partners had had sex with a gay or bisexual man within the past five years. In a separate survey of gay and bisexual men in San Francisco, six percent of the respondents said that they had had sex with women within the past six months. In a study of 1,200 gay men in the Bay area, 23 percent of the respondents reported that they had had sex with women within the past five years.

Some bisexual men fear that the disclosure of any history of past relationships with men will turn a woman off. Perry is a forty-year-old masseur in Asheville, N.C. Notorious among his friends as a man who sleeps around, he hardly sees himself that way. "I'm something of a maver-



ick," he says. "I spend most of my time alone. What dating I do, I trust my judgment. I am extremely intuitive about people's wellness and their participation in their wellness process. I'm drawn to people who are in touch with their processes; I would intuit if someone had something as degenerative as the AIDS virus.

"I lived in San Francisco about eight years ago. I was in a place of questioning about my sexual identity. I had a gay experience for a while, working things out in my relationship with my father. Earlier in my sexual identity I had been tied up with my mother. During the past eight years my masculine identity has been coming out more. I don't think anyone meeting me now would know that experience had been part of my process.

"Whether I would tell a woman about my experience would depend on how much I trusted her. The fact that so much time has elapsed since I was in San Francisco makes



me worry less. Besides, wellness is a process of being. I don't buy into the Western-model germ theory that germs attack us. I am more attracted to the Eastern model, which has to do with a person's energy. Someone may be AIDS-susceptible because of abuse of their basic wellness process. If you have a certain attitude, you draw things to you.

"The question of getting the antibody test flashed across my mind several months ago. My intuitive reply to myself was, 'No, I don't need to.' A year and a half ago I took a test for VD and was okay. I know that test is not specifically for AIDS, but the results were in my consciousness.

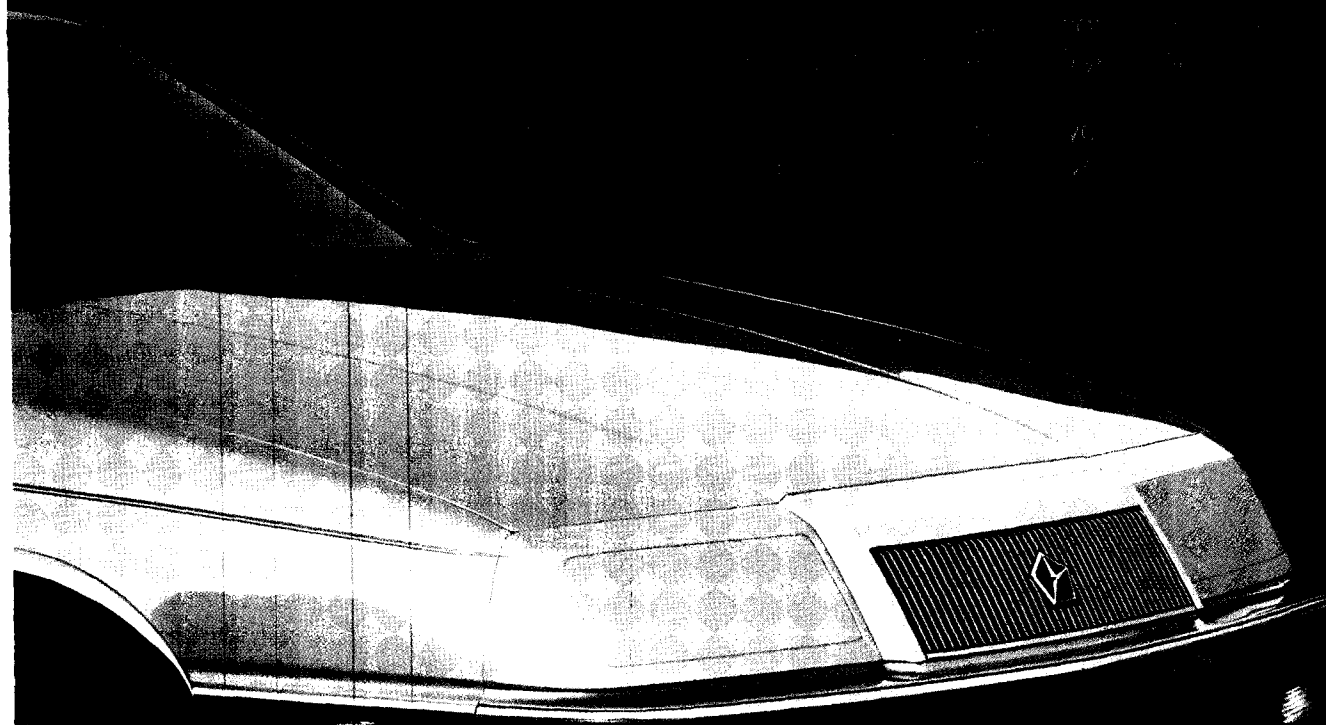
"One woman did bring up AIDS on a date. It was in her consciousness. I told her my approach about germs. She has to deal with that." He did not mention his experience in San Francisco to her. "I would be very protective of myself before I gave that information to someone," he says.

Bisexuals have always been the big problem in tracing sexually transmitted diseases, according to Rick Reich, who spent several years working as a venereal-disease case investigator in Los Angeles before moving to Nevada. "In my experience," he says, "a certain kind of bisexual man is not immoral but amoral as regards sexual candor. He is less apt to feel the guilt or conflict that a gay man might going both ways." Dr. Marcus Conant, of the California AIDS Task Force, has also given a lot of thought to the potential role of bisexuals in the epidemic. He says, "If one point could be gotten across to the ladies: just remember, a good-looking man is good-looking to *everybody*."

Of course, many bisexuals are frank, and a great many women—more than is commonly realized—are content with the knowledge that a lover may occasionally need another kind of satisfaction. Jill is a forty-year-old teacher in Little Rock, Arkansas. "I got married when I was eigh-



BARON DEIVING



teen," she says. "I found out after I divorced, twelve years later, that my husband was bisexual. I didn't have sex for seven years and just raised my child. Then I went back to school and made a nice friend in my class, who turned out to be gay. He invited me to the bars with some of his friends. I was petrified at the possibility of socializing again, but thought, 'Well, I'm not ready to date again, but it would be fun to have a few beers. The gay bars would be a nice start. Nobody will bother me.' Boy, was I wrong. I probably got propositioned more than the gay men I went with. I could have had three men every night."

At one of the bars she met John, who had been closeted until he was twenty-eight. They began to date. "It was an awakening for me. I had been a straight missionary-position type until I met John," Jill says. "I think bisexual men are more caring, tender, and they are not into a macho role that much. They know how to make love." She had a few affairs with other gay men she met. John had a few more encounters. Last year he developed a rash and took the antibody test. He tested negative. He had only a few encounters after the test before asking Jill to marry him. "I was really surprised by the reaction of our gay friends, surprised how many of them said they wished they could get married if they could meet the right person," Jill says. She and John have a pact that either one of them can have extramarital relations. John says that the fear of AIDS has prevented him from considering a fling. Jill says that she has no desire to be involved with anyone else.

"I have thought about taking the test," she says. "I guess I figure that if John has it, I have it. If I'm going to get it, I'm going to get it. I'm not afraid of death. Also, I would take the test if I hadn't had a hysterectomy—I wouldn't risk getting pregnant and giving this to a baby. I am in hopes that John will start using condoms before we have to take the test."

THE VOICE OF THE CANEFIELD

Spitless voice of the cicada,
of dry crumpling paper,

of the newspaper when it folds:
so is the singing of the canefield

to the wind which through its leaves
from razor to razor breathes,

wind which all night and day
leafs through and is left grazed.

—*João Cabral de Melo Neto*
translated by Richard Zenith

From *A Escola das Facas* (1980)

"I'm afraid not too many of our friends practice safe sex. We have several friends with AIDS. A good friend of mine had sex with a woman yesterday—and he is usually a basic bottom [the receptive partner in anal sex] with men. They didn't use condoms. Even when I hear anything about AIDS on television, I feel like crying. I guess I now feel like the gay community is my community."

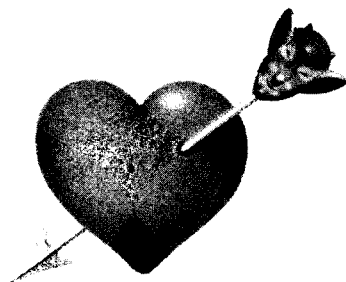
THE PAINFUL DILEMMA OF CLOSET GAYS HAS ALREADY become a major theme of the epidemic. Less will be heard about another group, who might be described as closet straights. AIDS gives gay men a powerful motive to examine the sources and strength of their commitment to their sexual preference.

Until 1973 the American Psychiatric Association officially regarded homosexuality as a pathology. Soon after the APA abandoned that characterization, the concept of androgyny came into vogue—the notion of a more fluid line between gay and straight orientation and the possibility of identifying male and female characteristics in both men and women. A new scale was suggested as a replacement for the Kinsey 0–6 scale (0 being completely heterosexual, 6 being completely homosexual, in fantasy, practice, and preference; almost no one was a 0 or a 6). The proposed alternative involved two separate measurements, first of a person's attraction to members of his or her own sex and then of that person's attraction to the opposite sex. One person might have a very low level of both and be contentedly celibate, while another person might be strongly inclined in both directions.

Even in the golden days of gay liberation, the seventies and early eighties, therapists reported significant numbers of patients practicing homosexuality who wished to change their sexual orientation. In 1980 the APA's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* officially listed a diagnosis called ego-dystonic homosexuality. In Freudian terminology, behavior patterns that suit the ego are called systonic and those that cause conflict are called dystonic.

The Masters and Johnson Institute, in St. Louis, Missouri, has been treating ego-dystonic homosexual patients since 1964. Dr. William Masters reports that the number of inquiries about the program has jumped in the past eighteen months. Most of the patients participate in a sexual-readaptation program whose final stages involve sex coaching with a female partner. Some need only intensive counseling sessions. "Frequently the men have convinced themselves that they are gay, been labeled gay at an early age by peers, or are late bloomers who have little sexual experience of any sort," Masters says. "But all of them are less than charmed with their homosexual preferences and have really secure reasons for change beyond fear of public opprobrium." He won't quantify the prevalence of ego-dystonic homosexuality beyond saying, "There's a lot of it out there, and it shows up in about fifteen percent of the gay men who come to the clinic for all different reasons."

Fears, questions, and misconceptions about AIDS come up frequently at the clinic in other therapy settings, which doesn't surprise Masters. "We have spent twenty-five years trying to disabuse people of their inhibitions about discussing sexuality, and apart from the fact that people are slightly more comfortable with the subject—AIDS wouldn't have been mentioned out loud twenty-five years ago—it is as if we made no mark at all. The response to AIDS has only underscored the depth of our frustration here."



Fatally Misinformed

THE GOVERNMENT HAS OFTEN BEEN ACCUSED OF squeamishness regarding AIDS. If there were one subject about which federal officials might be expected to overcome their reticence, it would be AIDS in the armed forces. Indeed, discussions of mandatory antibody screening of all military personnel began a year ago. Last year more than 400,000 prospective recruits were required to take the antibody test; 1.5 per thousand tested positive. Yet pre-induction screening would seem to be inadequate without regular mass screening on the bases, because many young men begin to engage in high-risk behavior only after they are in the Army—whether it be drug use, homosexuality, or seeing prostitutes.

In the past, efforts to regulate and inspect prostitutes have been initiated largely by the military, both here and in Europe. Venereal disease has always been an urgent concern for armies, being the primary reason for absenteeism. During successive wars the focus gradually shifted from regulation and examination of the prostitutes to education and inspection of the troops. "The chaplain said, 'Don't do it,'" Vern Bullough says. "Then the medic got up and said, 'Don't do it—but if you do, here are a few tips.'" Men who remember their term in the Army in the Second World War insist that syphilis seemed no less a scourge than AIDS does now. It is now known that only a quarter of untreated syphilitics die, and many people die of natural causes without ever knowing they were infected, but these facts were not common knowledge then, and prior to the introduction of penicillin a serviceman was indeed taking big chances when he went to a prostitute. Venereal disease was a major problem on bases everywhere, despite mandatory contact notification and an intensive education campaign. (A typical Army poster showed a harlot walking arm in arm with Hitler and Tojo under the caption "VD—THE WORST OF THE THREE.")

With AIDS the issues extend to drug use and homosexuality, neither of which the military much likes to address. The myth persists that gay men wouldn't be interested in joining the Army, when in fact the Army has traditionally provided a place for young gay men from small towns all over the country to make their first contacts.

A doctor who practices near the large Army base at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, believes that "cases are just incubating away out there." The reports of a few men stationed at the base support this impression. "When I came to Fort Bragg, almost two years ago, this place was a madhouse," says one young recruit. "It was wild. Outside any bar on Bragg Boulevard the girls were lined up in cars, waving at you. There are fewer prostitutes around the base. Sure, some guys still see them, but if they've got the slightest little cold or stomach ache the next day, they are down at TMC [troop medical clinic] in about five minutes. That's what happened to my roommate, and he said, 'That's it for me.' There is still a lot of VD around here. Most men won't talk about it, though a few guys still think it is a status symbol. 'I've had it six times, mine almost fell off'—that sort of bragging, but it is changing.

"There is some talk of AIDS around the base. They might be giving the AIDS test to everybody [he didn't know that some testing had already begun], and most people seem to think that is a good idea. There are some pamphlets about AIDS, but most guys say they'd like more specific information. Like, I know there is something about needles but I don't know what it is. They've got a bad drug problem here. I'd say about an eighth of the men are on hard drugs, and a lot more have tried it. They have been giving blood tests for drugs since I got here. You'd be surprised how many guys on drugs think they're going to take the drug test but it won't show anything. They can somebody instantly for drugs.

"The problem is that everybody gets so bored. And there are no women. The message is, 'Get married or forget it.' You have to have some female company sometime. The situation creates a lot of homosexual behavior, which is the one subject nobody wants to talk about around here. They'll tell you about clap or prostitution, but nobody wants to talk about the gay stuff. What do they expect? Put four guys together sleeping in a tiny room, the very same guys you work with all day. It is too much for some people.

"I was on CQ [control of quarters] one night and a guy came running downstairs. He was in tears, saying his roommates were in bed together. Let me tell you, those two were out the next morning."

Another serviceman confirms the drug problem on the base but thinks that people know a fair amount about AIDS. "One guy in our area has it," he says. "The chaplain told us, and the reason the chaplain knew was because this guy was engaged and was afraid to tell his fiancée. But the chaplain wouldn't tell us his name, and I thought, 'That's nice, chaplain, that's real nice, but it sucks.' Because what if I keep shaking this character's hand repeatedly, not knowing who he is, and I catch it?"

IGNORANCE ABOUT AIDS HAS VARYING CONSEQUENCES. In the case of most people, it means treating those they suspect to be potential carriers rudely or worse. In the case of young servicemen, ignorance may lead to serious trouble. In the case of sexually active gay men, it is a tragedy—as it is for poor black and Hispanic youths, among whom there is a nationwide epidemic of venereal disease, which is a certain cofactor in facilitating transmission of HIV. This in combination with the pervasive use of drugs among blacks and Hispanics ensures that the epidemic will hit them hardest next.

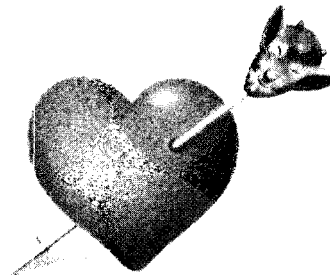
Medical professionals, to whom the majority of people turn for answers about AIDS, are themselves uninformed. A twenty-eight-year-old personnel director in Hoboken, New Jersey, says that she recently took the antibody test and was told by her doctor that the negative results were meaningless. "You may have had sex with someone five years ago and not manifest antibodies till five years from now," he told her. (It can take as long as a year to seroconvert, but not ten years.) A twenty-nine-year-old real-estate salesman in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, reports that his doctor talked him out of taking the test "because it would flip the technicians out." The doctor said he had talked another man out of taking the test that week, after making sure he wasn't gay. "He said he would have given him the test if the guy had been gay," the salesman says.

Sometimes ignorance about the disease, combined with irrational fears and, often, guilt about extramarital sexual activities, can lead people to develop psychosomatic symptoms of AIDS. Dr. Samuel E. Pegram, of Bowman-Gray School of Medicine, in Winston-Salem, claims that doctors are especially susceptible to this so-called AIDS-phobia. "Any of us who treat AIDS patients at one time or another come down with symptoms that look like AIDS," he says. "But beyond that, I have been amazed at the number of colleagues who never had anything to do with AIDS patients who felt perfectly well until they started thinking about it."

Another prominent AIDS physician in the South recalls the case of one doctor who was about to get married. "He had worked near New York City in the late seventies, where he'd picked up a few girls in shopping malls and gone to bed with them. Now he was convinced that he had AIDS. Nothing I could say made any difference, and he worked himself into such a state that one day he showed up in my office with skin lesions and a coated tongue. Now he absolutely knew he had AIDS and insisted that I give him the blood test. To put his mind at rest, I agreed. Well, almost unbelievably—he must have had a slight cold or infection—he tested in the positive range by a hair's breadth.

"He became hysterical. We gave him a second ELISA test and the more definitive test, the Western blot, both of which are routinely given for any positive result, and cultured his blood. Everything came back negative. Next morning he followed me around the hospital with a stack of articles about the incidence of false negatives. Finally—

I'd seen this coming—he told me he wouldn't get married until his fiancée took the blood test. She called, and I told her that under no circumstances should she give in to the pressure. They eventually got married and everything is fine, but that sort of hysteria is not unusual."



A City Mobilizes

UNTIL THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DECIDES TO oversee and coordinate AIDS information campaigns everywhere, each community must take action in its own time and way. It falls to a few people in each city to wade through government-grant applications, CDC reports, and local demographic statistics; they must then decide where and how to begin presenting as a legitimate threat a disease that is still an abstraction to most people. The mobilization of a particular town or state often has less to do with the local incidence of AIDS than it does with the response of local public-health officials, the degree of unity and awareness among gay men, and local ethnic and religious traditions. Minnesota has only about 148 reported cases of AIDS, yet the state's education and prevention campaign promises to be a model for other public-health officials facing what might be called the second stage of the epidemic.

Minnesotans, with their tradition of Scandinavian civic-mindedness, pride themselves on dealing with problems quickly, effectively, and unhysterically. "Our ethnic heritage makes us less volatile," says Dr. John Weiser, a family physician in Minneapolis and a member of the state health commissioner's task force on AIDS. Invoking the region's agricultural history, people talk of constructing floodgates, of digging firebreaks, of shutting the barn door before the horse gets out. AIDS educators try to take advantage of traditional community settings to get the message across. The Minnesota AIDS Project spent months trying to secure a booth at the state fair, which 500,000 Minnesotans visit each year. Members couldn't quite figure out why, finally, they were relegated to the horticultural building rather than assigned a place in the education building with other community groups. "Maybe they thought it was a kissing booth," says a member of the Project.

It was the kind of bureaucratic slight that could have caused a confrontation in San Francisco a couple of years ago, but the gay scene in Minneapolis is not as politicized as it is in the Bay Area. In fact, AIDS has made it clear that there is a true gay community in just one city in America. Across the country openly gay men forming AIDS organiza-

tions in their communities say that their main problem is that most gay men are married and closeted or may not think of themselves as gay at all, despite occasional encounters in public washrooms, adult bookstores, or highway rest stops. In the Minneapolis area openly gay men—of whom there are approximately 6,000, along with approximately 100,000 closeted gay men—are unusually well integrated into the general community. Minneapolis has had gay-rights legislation for nearly ten years; similar legislation did not pass in New York City until last year. Gay leaders invoke, again, the Scandinavian ethic: what you do is your own business—just don't make a big deal of it.

The attitudes of Twin Cities residents toward AIDS are probably a good indicator of what thoughtful, well-informed people in America know about the disease. Last year the Minneapolis *Star and Tribune* conducted an AIDS survey of its readers. Nearly three quarters of the respondents agreed with the statement that AIDS has spread so much that it is now a threat to the American public. Forty percent, however, thought the disease could be spread through kissing and forty-seven percent thought that donating blood was a way to catch AIDS—still the most common misconception. Yet despite holding these beliefs, approximately nine out of ten of the respondents said that they do not worry about getting AIDS themselves. The public's simultaneous perception and denial of risk undoes health officials.

"Now is the time to really move, if in ten years Minneapolis isn't to have the problem that San Francisco has," says Michael Osterholm, the state epidemiologist and one of the chief designers of the state's AIDS program. He emphasizes the importance of education but says that the paramount lesson that he has extracted from San Francisco's experience with AIDS is that education does not appear to be the decisive factor in producing changes in high-risk sexual behavior. He points to a study by the San Francisco psychologist Leon McKusick of gay men in San Francisco, which began in 1983. At the start of the study the participants' level of education about safe sex was extremely high, and yet many well-informed men had made little or no change in their sex lives. Of those who had, many were people who had a vivid memory of someone in the advanced stages of AIDS. "Education on disease prevention has never been enough in and of itself," Osterholm says. "The issue is first finding a way to make people aware of their vulnerability."

Denial is rampant. Physicians and psychologists describe many men who have remained antibody-negative after several years of unrestrained sexual activity and have taken their good fortune to mean that they have some special resistance to the disease and can continue as before. It is difficult to foster a sense of vulnerability in someone whose risk behavior is a compulsion. This is especially a problem with IV-drug users. Dan Cain, the executive director of Eden House, the city's best-known drug-rehabilitation program, believes that drug addicts are going to be

the biggest "crossover" in bringing AIDS to the general public in Minneapolis. He is one of many drug-abuse authorities nationwide who are concerned about cocaine users, many of whom are young professionals—the last people one usually associates with shooting up. A recent survey by the National Institute of Drug Abuse revealed that 80 percent of all cocaine users have taken the drug intravenously.

At Eden House, Cain holds monthly seminars on AIDS and distributes health-department brochures on cleaning needles and safe sex. But he groans at accounts of halfway-house programs in San Francisco that distribute bleach to addicts to clean their needles. "Look," he says, "I'm happy to distribute pamphlets and have seminars, but I am here to get people *off* drugs. Most addicts don't know that in Minnesota you can buy needles over the counter; it doesn't become illegal till they are used for drugs. So am I supposed to tell people, Hey, why not go down to the drugstore and pick up a bag? I just don't feel right doing that."

Defining the line between education and promotion is similarly complicated for AIDS information on sex. Such efforts in Minneapolis, as everywhere else, are being partly shaped by events at the federal level. In the summer of 1985 the CDC invited applications for "innovative risk reduction" proposal grants. The proposals came flooding in. Innovative they were, but many were so sexually explicit that the CDC decided that taxpayers had to be involved in evaluating their suitability. The release of federal funds to any community for educational projects or materials was made contingent upon majority approval of the materials by a panel of local advisers that reflected a cross section of the community. It was not to be dominated by gays.

Many studies from San Francisco and a recent report from the CDC suggest the impossibility of reaching all groups in a community with a single campaign. "For example, with Latinos, you try to reach family structures and health providers," says Holly Smith, the information director of the San Francisco AIDS Foundation. "With blacks, you have to communicate through the churches, and with gays of course you need the bars." The Surgeon General has urged mandatory sex education, which now exists in only New Jersey, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. Overnight, AIDS is supposed to force the hand of opponents of sex education. Yet even in San Francisco, where such a program is well established, it has taken nearly two years for a pilot AIDS course plan to be distributed to a sampling of city teachers. In most places the trick will be to warn children about AIDS without teaching them about sex.

The perception prevails across the country that gays—either because they are of a different sensibility or because they are at higher risk, depending on whom you talk to—can take, need, or deserve more sexually explicit materials. Those trying to distribute AIDS educational materials in Minneapolis agree that closet gays will resist messages

directed specifically at homosexuals. And the heterosexual population is to be educated but not alarmed. So a gay newspaper might carry a steamy ad of a nude man stepping into an oversized condom and pulling it up the way a woman might slip into a dress. With the large population of closet cases in mind, the Minnesota AIDS Project has developed a series of ads featuring good-looking athletes—a cyclist, a mountain climber, a skater—wearing safety gear, with the caption “PLAY IT SAFE.” These and other ads for the general public suggest, “Choose partners you can trust and practice safe sex.”

The Minnesota AIDS Project is currently trying to persuade the city’s metropolitan transit authority to accept two bus ads that contain the word *condom*. “You can see the situation that AIDS has put public-health educators in,” Michael Osterholm says. “Do we say ‘Use condoms’? Do we say, ‘Here are the condoms’? Do we say ‘Here’s how you put on the condom. This is the shaft . . .’? Besides, while condoms are important, they are not fail-safe. They are only going to slow the epidemic down, they are not going to stop it. Someone may avoid exposure for two years and then be infected two years from now. Anyone who is sexually active runs the risk of being exposed to the virus sooner or later. The issue is multiple partners, though nobody wants to hear that, and as for anyone who says it too often, it is ‘Shoot the messenger.’”

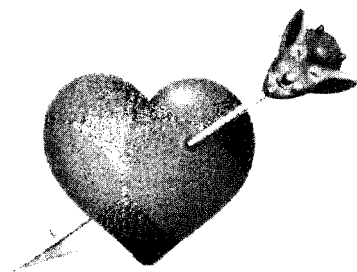
Skeptical about the impact of broad-based education campaigns alone, Osterholm became convinced last year that the most effective strategy to employ against AIDS would be to zero in on the most sexually active individuals in risk groups, and the blood-test sites seemed the place to do it. Most important were people who tested antibody-positive. “It is probably more important to reach one positive individual than ten who are negative,” he says. The best bet seemed to be to counsel antibody-positive people and then to encourage them to notify as many of their sexual partners as they can remember, or to offer to perform that service for them. Such a program has been in place for about half a year. If a person opts to have the Minnesota Department of Health notify his or her contacts, the record of their names is destroyed within six months after they have been notified of the risk of exposure and advised to take the antibody test.

The effectiveness of the program has mitigated the initial concerns of some gay leaders about potential breaches of confidence. Osterholm maintains that the state Public Health Service has been notifying contacts in syphilis cases for nearly a century and has an excellent record of not releasing data. He also points out that of the 11,000 Minnesotans tested in the first year, the majority chose to go to their private physicians rather than to the test sites, and physicians must report any antibody-positive person by name to the Department of Health.

The number of people being tested in Minneapolis rose sharply after an incident last spring. WCCO-TV, in the Twin Cities, co-produced a documentary about Fabian Bridges, a man with AIDS who, it emerged in the show,

continued after his diagnosis to have sex and sometimes solicited it. The morning after the show was shown at a local town meeting, Caroline Lowe, a reporter for WCCO, received a phone call from a man named Stan Borrman, who said that he was a former male prostitute and that he was calling to ask that the station look into the prostitution agency he’d worked for, whose owner, he suspected, was infected with AIDS and had men working for him who were antibody-positive. Lowe asked Borrman his own antibody status. It was positive. In fact, he had ARC, or AIDS-related complex, which often leads to AIDS. (Because the greatest amount of virus can be cultured from ARC patients, they are believed to be the most infectious.) He had had more than a thousand partners in the three and a half years since he had become ill, and didn’t know how much earlier than that he had become infected. Borrman, an alcoholic and drug addict, practiced safe sex with customers when he was “sober” but couldn’t remember what he did when he wasn’t. Finally he’d decided he couldn’t go on, confronted his boss, and quit.

Borrman told Lowe that most of his customers had been suburban married men. He agreed to do an on-air interview, partly in hopes that clients would recognize him and go in to have antibody testing. The interview produced all kinds of frantic calls, including one from a woman who had once seen Borrman with her husband. Her husband had told her that Borrman was a new employee. Borrman entered a chemical-dependency treatment clinic. He told the reporter that throughout his years of seeking treatment he’d been amazed at how many customers’ faces he had recognized among the counselors, doctors, and officials. Several times he urged Lowe to take the antibody test herself. “You can never know about your husband,” he said.



Fear and Desire

INTIMATE FREEDOMS ARE AT STAKE. THE GAY COMMUNITY’S experience with AIDS has already produced two equally unsatisfying redefinitions of sexual liberation. Last August the *New York Native*, a gay newspaper, published an article titled “High Risk Sex as Existential Choice,” by R. William Wedin, Ph.D. Wedin set forth the story of Sam, a young man whose physician had refused to treat him any longer, dismissing him as suicidal because he had decided to continue having anal sex with his longtime lover, though both he and his partner had been promiscuous as recently as four years earlier and neither had yet taken the test. Acknowledging that there may well be a

suicidal element, among others, in the sorts of health-jeopardizing behavior that people continue to engage in, Wedin concluded by asserting that for many men like Sam, choosing to persist in high-risk sex while being aware of the potential consequences may be "a statement of self-hood. . . . a song for the soul." Writing on the occasion of Sam's death, Wedin reflected that such men may be "tragic heroes all. . . . Not because they covet death or see in it a masochistic 'high,' but because, after sober study and thought, they arrive at that moment which, according to Aristotle, can only be described as one of 'awe.' When they realize that they, if only they, must risk even their own annihilation in order to *be*. To be as well as exist. To be whomever they choose to be. . . ."

Dr. Marcus Conant offered a radically different view in a letter to the San Francisco *Bay Area Reporter*, a gay newspaper. His message was simple: If you don't want to catch AIDS, don't expose yourself to the virus. Given the fact that safe sex is not always possible—condoms break or leak, straights want to procreate sometimes—a person to whom AIDS is the primary concern has two choices. He can find a partner with the same antibody status as his own and practice safe sex as much as possible, or he can be celibate, and hope that a cure or vaccine appears soon. It was advice he had offered before: "Take up mountain climbing, write the great American novel, just give it up."

The newspaper responded to the letter by publishing an editorial called "Get Thee to a Nunnery," which began, "Dr. Strangelove is back. . . ." The celibacy question provoked yet another round of debate in the gay community at large. Certain AIDS activists suggested that people so inclined to promote celibacy might have "separate grief issues" they weren't acknowledging and might fear intimacy as a result of having lost so many loved ones.

The questions Wedin and Conant pose, now writ large for the gay community, will eventually become meaningful to heterosexuals. In fact, sides are already being taken in the discussion about straights and AIDS. In a *Playboy* editorial last year, the editors responded to advice that the sex expert Dr. Helen Singer Kaplan had offered to single women in a magazine article: "Remember, no casual sex ever again." The editors wrote, "It's a good idea to forget about anonymous sex, but how far do we have to go? . . . When two people meet for the first time and spend an intense, nerve-tingling day and a half together, with no intention of buying a house, having children or taking a mortgage on a condo, is that casual sex?" In other words, weigh the risk against the anticipated pleasure. But considerations are seldom so clear. In the face of AIDS, the impulses toward promiscuity and celibacy coexist in many women and men, and the tugs of attraction and fear, desire and mistrust, come into play simultaneously.

For great numbers of people, even for many of those who worry about AIDS, the prospect of an orgasm in ten minutes eclipses any thought of the next twenty years of their lives. The notion of "safe sex," or, perhaps more accurately, "safer sex," looks like their brightest hope, and

the more specific information they can get, the better. Much of it is likely to come from the increasing number of people with a commercial interest in the promotion of safe sex.

Condom sales have reportedly risen in the past two years, although manufacturers will do anything not to acknowledge the role of gay men in their sales and are clearly determined to avoid association with homosexuality. Increases have been observed in the sale of spermicidally lubricated condoms, such as the Sheik Elite and the Ramses Extra, produced by Schmid Laboratories. There are only a few such products on the market; other manufacturers are assessing the potential impact of the Supreme Court's decision to let stand a judgment by a New Jersey court, which awarded over \$4 million to a couple who claimed that nonoxynol-9 had caused birth defects in their baby daughter. The issue of product liability will remain a major problem in combating AIDS, less in relation to prophylactic products than to vaccine and drug development.

One official of a pharmaceutical company that recently ceased distributing a line of condoms questions the reports of a boom in condom sales because of AIDS. "We never realized a penny on the product," he says, pointing out that most of the publicized sales figures come from the condom industry. Fluctuations in sales may be due to the removal of IUDs from the American market, homosexuals' fearing AIDS, or women—most of them married—reaching an age when discontinuing the Pill is recommended. Still, most industry experts might say that the company got out of the business too soon, claiming that AIDS has done for condoms what herpes never managed to do. "We can't look like we're gloating over the situation," says a senior vice president of marketing for one manufacturer. "Besides, even though STDs [sexually transmitted diseases] are certainly one reasonable substrategy in marketing condoms, if we go that route and a cure is found in one year, where are we going to be?" Advertisements for one line, LifeStyles, refer specifically to AIDS and picture a distraught woman. It remains to be seen whether the grim text ("I enjoy sex, but I'm not ready to die for it") will attract or repel consumers, and how significant the increase in condom sales will be.

To gather information for marketing purposes, various manufacturers have held round-table discussions with women about condoms. Participants' concerns are predictable: they worry that men will prefer that they put on the condoms but that they won't be able to do it deftly or that a man they're dating will lose interest if they insist on condoms. Men's feelings range from not minding condoms at all to actually preferring no sex to sex with them. In the San Francisco AIDS Foundation survey of heterosexuals, people were asked to rate different sexual activities on a scale of 1 to 10. The group as a whole rated vaginal sex with a condom at 4.9, oral sex at 6, vaginal sex without a condom at 9.2.

Many prostitutes learn to put a condom on with their mouths and take it off without a man even knowing. The

ability to use condoms skillfully, safely, and spontaneously will soon become important to many more people. One of the big problems with educational materials about sex and AIDS is that they tell people what not to do—don't exchange bodily fluids—but fail to suggest what they can do instead. Inspiration must supplement education, and it appears to be on the way, coming from unexpected quarters.

"Some education is going to have to reach the level of pornography or you are going to be missing enormous numbers of people who are definitely at risk," says Jim Mitchell, one half of Mitchell Brothers, the country's best known adult-film producers. The Mitchells have recently released *Behind the Green Door: The Sequel*, the first safe-sex porno film. Last summer it was the number-one adult-film home-video seller in the country.

Throughout the film plastic gloves are squeaking, vibrators humming, spermicide flowing. One critic suggested that the film was about as titillating as open-heart surgery. "It got a *great* review in *Screw*," Mitchell says curtly. "It is a start." He acknowledges that because the film was designed as a model for other pornographers, the education message may be too strong. The brothers' next venture into "latex sex" films, he says, will be "a lot more molten." Mitchell is quick to admit that he and his brother pursued the safe-sex angle in part because they didn't want to face lawsuits one day from stars claiming to have contracted AIDS while working on a Mitchell Brothers film.

The star of *Behind the Green Door: The Sequel*, twenty-four-year-old Elisa Florez, whose stage name was Missy Manners, has attracted more attention than the film itself. (Since Judith Martin, the "Miss Manners" columnist, filed a cease-and-desist order, Florez has gone by the name Missy.) The daughter of a prominent Republican, she is a former staff member of the Republican National Committee, Senate page, and staff member for Senator Orrin Hatch. Florez, who was featured in last month's issue of *Playboy*, may become the pinup girl of the epidemic. "We don't usually do porno stars," says *Playboy*'s photo editor, Gary Cole. "But she came in wearing this angora sweater with pearls all over it, handing out her little safe-sex kits, and everybody just about fell over. She is the furthest thing from a porn queen." The *Playboy* feature focuses on Florez's background rather than her safe-sex message. "We wanted to be careful not to be seen as endorsing something," Cole says. "Besides, the message seems to be that the only safe activity left is talking dirty on the phone." (Cole may have the kit; he hasn't seen the movie.)

Florez has spent months promoting the film and the safe-sex message. "The government just isn't about to do it," she says. "I remember sitting in on Senate hearings a few years ago where funding was cut for Planned Parenthood because some senators objected to the explicitness of the sex-education films for teenagers. Well, we're out to reach people who are promiscuous, have multiple partners, and still want to live their fantasies. It's a dirty job—dirty enough for pornographers."

Florez concedes that safe sex hasn't caught on in the pornographic-film industry yet and says she knows of many gay actors who are still making straight-sex films, bisexual films, and gay films. During the filming of *Behind the Green Door*, she says, she was "terrified of possible exposure" and insisted that each of her partners wear two condoms in case one broke. "First I put the nonoxynol-9 on the man, then a condom, then more nonoxynol-9, then a condom," she says. "In fact, a lot of men say they like the sensation of two condoms better than one. More friction."

Speaking before women's groups, Florez dispenses information approved by the San Francisco AIDS Foundation and other groups that sponsor safe-sex education. "Never use oil-based products, like Vaseline Intensive Care, Crisco, or baby oil, with a latex condom, because it makes the latex porous and nullifies the worth of the condom against the virus." In every group, she says, one woman invariably raises her hand and timidly asks, "Ohhh, Missy, how do you negotiate safe sex with your partner?" "I just say, 'Negotiate, bullshit. If you take off your panties, you take out a condom.'"

Her next project is to see that every buyer of the *Behind the Green Door* video also receives a complimentary Missy Safe-Sex Kit, which includes a pair of latex gloves, a packet of nonoxynol-9, several types of condoms, and a "denta dam"—a six-by-six-inch square of thin latex, to be spread over the vaginal area during oral sex—plain and chocolate flavored.

STRANGE DAYS—AND NIGHTS—LIE AHEAD. IT IS TRUE that there are still only about 1,100 cases of heterosexually transmitted AIDS. But it is also true that there were fewer than a hundred three years ago. The same numbers can be used to make a case for worrying or not worrying. Whatever happens, people will never get enough of tales of the epidemic, any more than they will tales of American slavery or of Nazis and their captives: the subject is subliminally pornographic, at once appalling and erotic. There is a certain excitement in having a legitimate reason—even a responsibility—to discuss in public what nice people have never discussed.

As the incidence of AIDS continues to rise, so will panic. But if fears, federal funds, and education alone are sufficient to alter people's most private habits, it will be for the first time ever. The changes that people at risk have been willing to make have not been sufficient. The impact of television could make a critical difference, especially if health officials and advertisers coordinate their efforts. Much is being asked of condoms, with all their frailties. It could be months but will probably be years before transmission of the virus is fully understood. Until then, safe sex is in the mind of the beholder. It can't hurt to think of the virus as having an intelligence, and a commitment to survival that exceeds that of many people. □

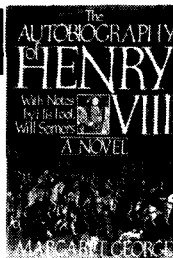
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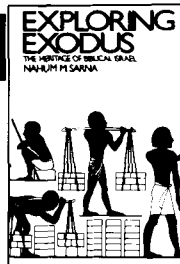
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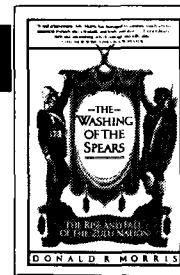
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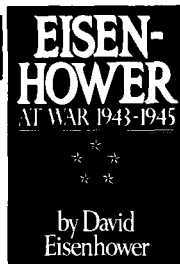
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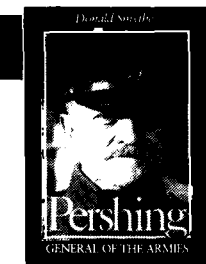
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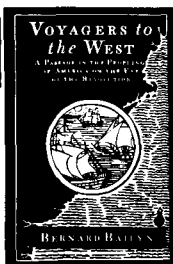
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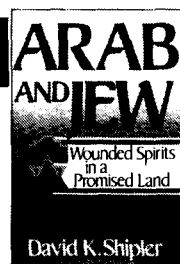
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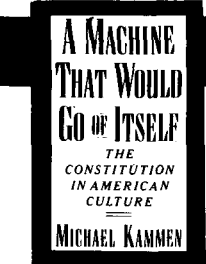
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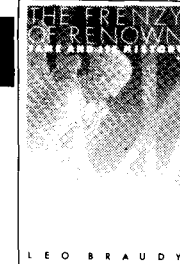
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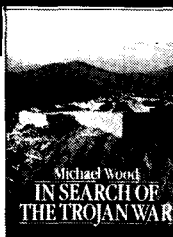
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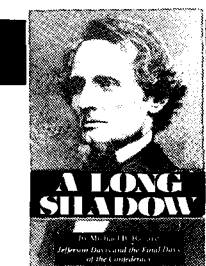
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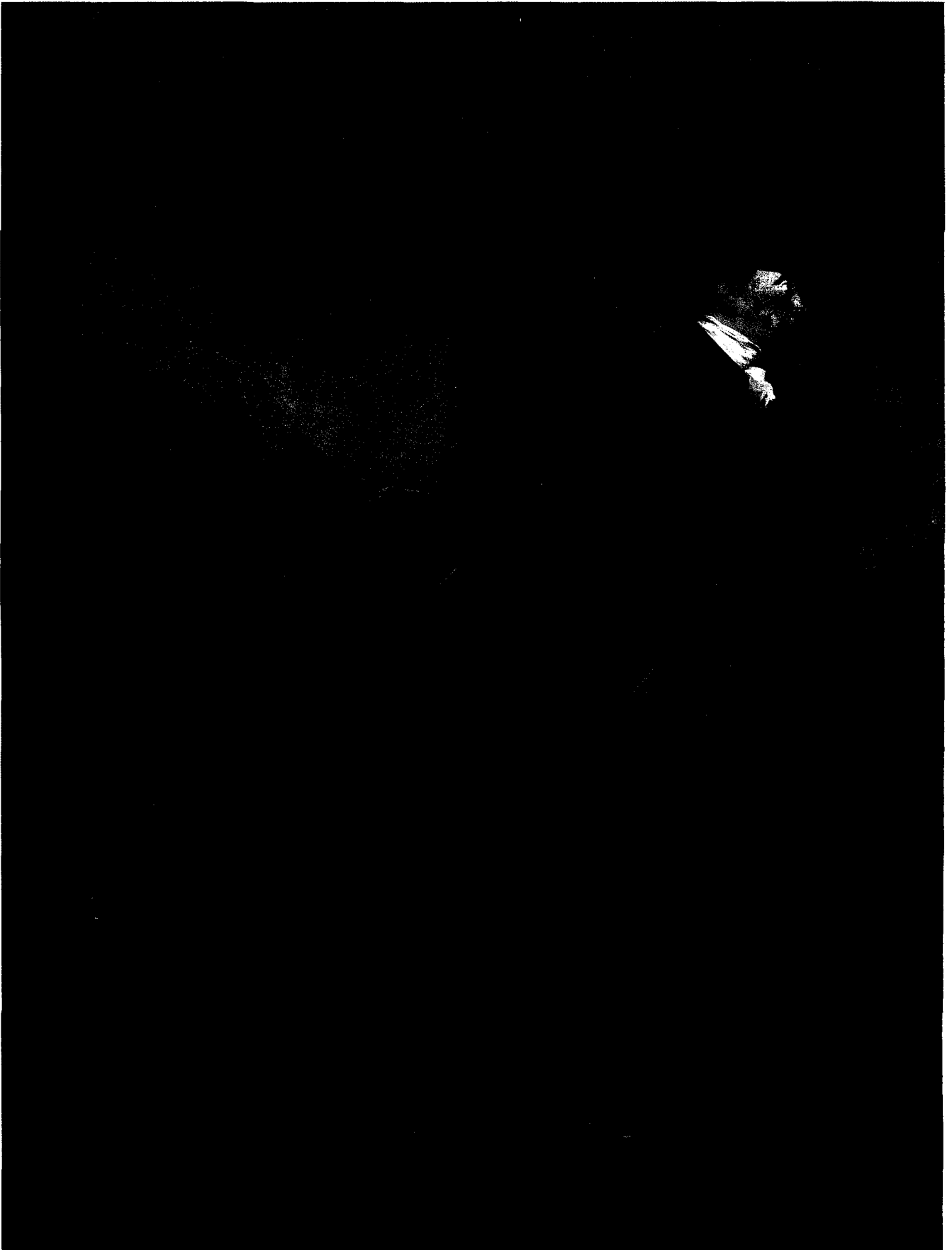
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THE REV. ROBERT WALKER SKATES

on Duddingston Loch at sunset
in black—black top hat and frock coat,
britches, garters, stockings, skating shoes
black. Except for pink laces binding his skates,
and the flush on his face, slightly deeper
at the ears,
he is black as this morning's sermon.

The sky between the hills behind the Rev. Walker
is the color of his ears.

Oh yes, his scarf is white.

And if I say the ice
is black, I mean it's not, is in fact
a window for fish.

His right leg is raised, extends behind him
like the long tail feathers of some exotic bird.
He is leaning into the wind,
leading with the sharpened blade of his nose,
arms wrapped one inside the other.

Or so Sir Henry Raeburn, R.A., did him
in oils, c. 1794.

Those fine cross-hatchings on the Loch
are not from all the Reverend's parishioners
celebrating after service, skating up a storm,

for the hills and the sky seem no less
skated upon.

It's Time. As surely as ice, oils crack.

For proof the pastor's not here
in the flesh, out for a spin before the night
can render him invisible,
please note how the artist has moved the top hat,
painted out the brim, imperfectly. Its ghost
still hovers, as if a moment ago the Rev. Walker
was looking down,
discovering a flashy trout.

His look is leveled now at something distant—
nothing, I think, as tangible
as the deepening blue of the night, but farther off.
He sees the miracle he'll duplicate,
not a major miracle, mind you, but still—

He has made his turn (notice the sliver of ice
kicked up by the heel of his skate),
has all but completed the figure 6
he means to raise
to an 8.

—*Rennie McQuilkin*

A Short Story



REVOLUTIONARIES

BY LEE K. ABBOTT

LONG BEFORE HE TURNED RADICAL AND DISAPPEARED into that underground we once used to hear so much about—and well before he showed up in my life again—Jimmy Spalding and I were best friends.

As kids, we swam the flume, the irrigation canal that passes under a railroad trestle where my father's farm—now my own—backs up to the levee for the Rio Grande, north of Las Cruces. At Alameda Junior High, the only middle school in what was then a town of thirty thousand, we co-captained our bowling team, The Flying Aces, one of whose trophies I still have in a closet somewhere. In the ninth grade we climbed a nearby mountain, dragging my mutt, Raleigh, along, and from a cliff thousands of feet higher than any bush in our desert we turned our backs on what we knew was Hicksville to watch clouds churn our way from the wonderland we'd heard could be found in California.

"Going out there," Jimmy said, "soon as I get my driver's license. You and me, pal. Do the whole scene, the beach trip."

In those days we aimed to be surfers. Or astronauts. Or truckers. We had the healthy fantasy life of all teenage boys—a dream life composed of open space and money and women from the pages of *Nugget* and *Gent*. We smoked cigarettes and talked tough and brought other guys—Jay Bullard and Mike Runyan—into a club that became part Three Musketeers, part Three Stooges. We'd watch the *Bowery Boys* at Jimmy's house, in the rec room his father had built after buying the American Linen Supply firm. We joined the wrestling team, me at 136, Jimmy at 144. One month we read everything by Leon Uris—especially *Battle Cry*, which, when I've looked at it since, seems nothing like the Second World War Sherwood Forest I remember from that first reading. We saw *Psycho* at the State Theater, and a week later read *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, which Jimmy declared was art with all the glands left in.

"I'm meant to do something," Jimmy would say. "I got a real relationship with destiny."

Then, the summer after we graduated, in 1966, as if one of us had died, we stopped being friends. I went to a National Thespian Conference at Indiana University, stayed on for a course in drama—still one of my interests—and did not hear from him for two months.

"How come you didn't answer my letters?" I asked in August. "I called three or four times too. Your dad said he didn't know where you were."

"Been on the move, man." He shrugged. "San Francisco, Telegraph Avenue, the VDC—the whole works."

He was standing inside his door, more in shadow than out.

"It's all coming together," he was saying. "Rock-and-roll, the race thing, Vietnam. It's a process, Buddy. Medgar Evers, Reverend King, Bob Dylan."

As I had planned, I told him about the kid I'd met at IU, Morgan Maxwell, whose father was a VP with Kemper Insurance. Morg had said that maybe the company plane would take us all—Jimmy, too, I'd insisted—to the Rose Bowl that winter.

"No can do," Jimmy said. "I got priorities now."

Sunlight was flying off a thousand surfaces, dizzying and sharp.

"I'll come back tomorrow," I told him. "We'll see a movie, go up to the club."

"Better not," he said. "I'm real busy. Got many things to do."

"After school starts, then?"

We were going to the local college, New Mexico State University, a deal we'd agreed to the September before.

"Yeah," he said. "That could be a real possibility."

I was trying to keep my mouth shut and back up at the same time. This wasn't Jimmy, I was thinking. This wasn't anybody I knew at all.

"Listen, man," he said, "I'll call you, okay? I got to straighten some things out first, serious head stuff."

So that fall we left for what I know now were two different worlds: me to that future opened up by Econ 102, Range Management, and *Principles of Organic Chemistry*, by Petry and Wallace; Jimmy to the fractured present revealed to him by the *Evergreen Review*, Alan Watts, and The Doors. I'd spot him every now and then, a figure moving alone and always upstream against the seven thousand shitkickers and jocks and sorority girls we undergraduates were. In front of Corbett Center one time I saw him handing out leaflets—a broadside from Senator George McGovern, of South Dakota: "Who really appointed us to play God for people elsewhere around the globe?"

"Long time," I told him. "How's it going?"

"Great," he said. "Got work to do, my man. Minds to change, hearts to heal."

He had a pile of dead-baby pictures—napalmed, he said—and a smile that had little to do with making Bs in Intro to Sociology.

"You really believe this stuff, don't you?"

"Abso-goddamn-lutely," he said. "You ought to join us, Buddy. We have no rules and everybody sleeps late."

Walking around us, as if we both had the plague, were kids who wanted to be doctors or mechanical engineers or state lawmakers or teachers—plain college kids who, I hoped, would one day be my friends and neighbors.

"Sorry," I told him. "If I knew what to do, I'd do it—honest."

"Man," Jimmy was saying, "you're young, you can be like me. I got it knocked, Buddy. I say what I want, smoke a little dope—it's paradise."

That October I heard that Jimmy intended to march on the Pentagon with Joan Baez. I learned, too, that he'd burned his draft card and planned to send the ashes to General Hershey. In April of 1968, before Johnson ended the bombing in North Vietnam, I found an essay, "Liberation From the Affluent Society," clipped under the windshield wiper of my truck.

"Read this shit, man," an attached note said. "Essential knowledge herein. Dig the part on mechanisms of manipulation and repression." He'd signed his initials inside a peace symbol. "It's like the man said," Jimmy had scrawled. "Rise up and abandon the creeping meatball."

That summer I worked for my father—chopping cotton, running the cultivator, odd jobs—and spent my free time at the country club. I didn't see Jimmy until I ran into him outside Young Hall, the English building, more than a year later.

"What're you taking?" he asked.

"Lit survey," I said. "Keats, Byron, those guys."

"I approve," he said. "The revolutionaries, first-rate. Broaden the mind, let the light shine in."

His hair hung long now, braided in the back, and watching his face was very hard work. He was pale, too, as if he'd spent three months in a closed room.

"I talked to your dad a couple times," I said. "He said you'd disappeared."

"Big rally next month," he said. "The Moratorium. You ought to show up. We'll get stoned, do miracles outrageous. It'll be highly provocative."

I thought about my own father, particularly the happy noises he made about Nixon, and Agnew's remarks about an "effete corps of snobs." Plus I had a girlfriend, Mary Jane Byrd, a Chi Omega who would one day be my wife and is part of the reason I'm telling this.

"I got classes," I said. "Maybe I'll watch."

He nodded, and I felt old—less his pal than his enemy.

"I like the hat," he said. "You're gonna make one hell of a cowboy, Buddy."

For three straight weeks his name was in the *Round-Up*, the student newspaper. He even made the *Sun News*, the

local daily. He was quoted often and with what seemed like considerable care. He called for upheaval and anarchy, a repudiation of mindless affluence. He mentioned H. Rap Brown and the SDS, and also what Fidel Castro was said to have accomplished.

"You know this guy, don't you?" Mary Jane asked me once.

She'd worked a year in Up With People and had a cheerful disposition I couldn't get enough of. What's more, she planned to be a TV newscaster, and I wanted to be around when the world saw how beautiful she was.

"Well," she said, "I think he's an idiot."

I was there that Friday, part of the curious who watched nearly two dozen students and faculty members and lonely townsfolk march across the steps of the administration building. They were what motley is. Waving signs, they shouted, "Hell, no, we won't go!" and Jimmy gave them a speech full of words like *oppression* and *imperialism*

and *colonialism*—the language and habits of mind, he has since told me, that we have to learn anew every time murder or public suffering occurs in the world we own.

"We want ROTC off campus," he hollered once. "We want Bob Hope off TV and Frank Sinatra out of the movies." He waved his hands. "We want classes in nudity."

Toward the end, before the campus cops and four state policemen broke it up by dragging Jimmy off, he delivered a rambling, singsongy declaration that mentioned Abe Maslow, Aldous Huxley, Carl Rogers, D. T. Suzuki—names that passed over me like clouds. They were the dead or the living, or the never-were. I wanted to talk with



him—if that's all this was—about being afraid, about what dead William Wordsworth's verse skills had to do with anything, and about what I was supposed to be doing in five or ten years. But he went on—"We're discussing human worth here!"—his hair flyaway, his T-shirt too small and covered with buttons, his cheeks painted like an Apache's, ignoring the hecklers who said he was queer, or chicken, or a Commie.

"And now," he announced, "in keeping with the theatrical theme of today's lesson, I will pee on this wall."

Instantly a state policeman, a sergeant named Krebs who is now an official of our Dona Ana County, burst out of the door behind Jimmy, and the scene was like two minutes of Walter Cronkite's *Evening News*: words were exchanged, an official arm snatched my friend by the neck, and suddenly he was spread-eagled on the pavement, face down, blood oozing from one ear.

"We'll surround this place," Jimmy was shouting. "We'll be holy men, chanting and beating drums, and this place will rise into the air. At three hundred feet all the evil spirits will fall out!"

Every time I play this moment in my memory, I see myself interfering—honorably and fearlessly. I am strong in this dreamworld I construct, and I am angry. I act righteously, like Superman or a loudmouth world-beater that Jimmy believed in. I do not stand, as I did, beside my girlfriend, Mary Jane Byrd, and shake, breathing hard. I do not watch my friend being yanked away, one arm twisted behind his back.

"I hate this sort of thing," Mary Jane Byrd said. "Whenever I hear about it, I just close my eyes and pretend."

A couple of hours later I visited him in a private room on the second floor of Memorial General Hospital.

"Your dad told me where to find you," I said.

He was sitting up in bed, wearing a hospital nightgown, a knot of gauze around his head, one eye swollen shut in a pulp of blue and yellow flesh. The room had eight shades of white, and the half-dozen hairs on his chin made him look feeble, stupid.

"Big man, my father," Jimmy was saying. "Pulled some strings, I gather. Asked me if I was concerned about my reputation, about a job. Man, I don't want a job."

In a chair beneath the wall-mounted TV sat a girl I'd never seen before. She was dark as an Indian, and fleshy in a way that made you think about sex.

"That's Carla," Jimmy said. "We're sort of going together. It's anti-revolutionary—I guess I'm very retrograde. I see us having lots of babies."

She made a point of ignoring my hello.

"Gonna run some errands," Carla said, getting up. "I'll catch you later."

"Classic bohemian," Jimmy said after she left. "She's from Parsippany, New Jersey. Came down here to molest ag students and be an agitator. We have a real spiritual thing."

Out the window I could see traffic on Water Street. Directly across stood the Papen Building, an improbable ten-

story bank and office tower whose basement Jimmy and I had explored when it was going up, years before. We'd been in its vault, all its secret rooms.

"Some scene, huh?" Jimmy said. "Man, what a rush the violence is. They wanted to rip my face off, three-D apocalypse. I was quoting Che Guevara in the cop car."

We were going to break, I was thinking. Nothing connected us anymore—not music we liked, not stories, not anything to think about.

"You lost a tooth," I told him.

He smiled. "I like the hole. Has symbolic value."

We used to fish for carp in the pools of the Rio Grande. Carrying pointed bamboo or cottonwood branches, we'd sprint up and down, slapping the water and howling. I was thinking of that and where we used to hide the Pall Mall cigarettes we'd swiped from my father.

"You ever try LSD?" Jimmy asked.

In my mind I was already out the door, putting between us then all the time and distance I feel now about these events.

"I'm really disappointed in you," he said. "You'd be so much more interesting as a leftist."

FOR JAMES EDWARD SPALDING, I NOW UNDERSTAND, violence as a way of life started the day the citizens of Rush Springs, Oklahoma, voted to outlaw public dancing. "That was the last damn straw," he told me. "After I heard that, I knew I wasn't dealing with the rational. I was into Oz." While I was being graduated and married (plus joining Kiwanis and our country club), and managing the farm and doing musicals like *Guys and Dolls* and *The Music Man* at the community theater in Mesilla Park, Jimmy was drifting outward and sinking, moving—so he admitted three days ago—underground, marching and protesting, going to jail, learning about machine pistols and pipe bombs that could be concocted from kerosene and guano. In fifteen years, while I was buying this and that, and planting onions and then lettuce and then chili peppers, and watching the world zoom by in a haze, Jimmy was going deeper and further and quieter. In the fifteen years between that day in the hospital and the night he appeared in my kitchen, while he was building a foot-thick file at the National Security Agency and whirling unpredictably under America, I was losing my dad to pancreatic cancer and my mom to alcoholism, and I was divorcing, and waking up every month, or year, to drink Old Grand-Dad and marvel at the quiet loneliness I was living in.

"There's no movement anymore," he confessed that night. "Just free-lancers. We wander, my friend. That's what I do: I drift and live off my anger."

I'd been at the men's locker at the country club, playing stud poker, and when I got home, something in the air—"the big mystery that is the twentieth century," Jimmy would say—told me I was not alone. My hair stood up or

the back of my neck; I prepared myself to beat the holy Jesus out of the dipstick who was trying to rob me. And then I saw him drinking coffee at my breakfast table and, right away, I was pleased he was there.

"Hope you don't mind," he said. "I made myself at home. We old-time hippies consume a lot of caffeine. Keeps the edges sharp. Gotta stay one jump ahead of the bad guys."

"How'd you get in?"

His was Brer Rabbit's goofy grin. "Magic. Hocus-pocus from the criminal elements, plus an American Express credit card."

He looked like a banker at a bowling alley: a good taxpayer's haircut and black horn-rimmed glasses that gave me the impression he had something to hide. He was gray at the temples and too tan for the March we'd had.

"Who mashed your nose?"

It was bent like those we've seen in the *Godfather* movies.

"Plastic surgery," he said. "Had a mole removed too. Very hush-hush."

He'd been gone, and now he was back, and for an hour he explained how he'd come here. Until the surgery he'd used a wig he'd bought at the Max Factor School for Make-up, in Hollywood. He'd taken classes at Kansas State University. He'd been a pen pal with the IRA's Joseph McCann. He'd met William Kunstler, written for *Overthrow* magazine, done time at the Rahway Penitentiary, in New Jersey, been hooked up with the Peace and Freedom Party. The names came and went: Las Vegas; Havana; Chicago; Sulphur Springs, Florida. He'd even bunked at an SLA house owned by Donald DeFreeze.

"That man did a thousand push-ups a day," Jimmy said. "He was once cornered by a cop with a police dog. Field Marshal Cinque was real pleasant until he snapped that dog's neck."

I asked a farm boy's question about Patty Hearst. Something was up. As in the old days, we'd get to it in a minute, or an hour.

"Nice lady," he said. "Not the sort to get nervous in a crowd."

He'd spent one summer in St. Thomas, learned to scu-

ba dive, and thought of becoming a deepwater laborer for Shell Oil in the North Sea. He'd attended a rock festival in Puerto Rico. "Saw Black Sabbath on Easter Sunday," he said. "A bad scene—knife fights, too much heat, rapes, no medics. That's when I knew it had turned serious."

I was thinking of my own life—bacon and eggs, the price of dry fertilizer, the Agriculture Department that John Block runs, where my mind went when the sun went down. Jimmy was right: life was serious. I had two slipped disks and one tiny ulcer to prove it.

"Met Doctor Spock once," Jimmy was saying. "He did a physical for my daughter, Ruthie. That man makes a mean banana daiquiri."

"You're married."

"Exactly," he said. "This is a very straight, nearly Republican child I have. She's not like us at all."

A name came to me from the long-ago days: "Carla."

He nodded, and I had time to study this man who, I would learn, remains of real interest to the FBI for such activities as bank robbery, interstate flight to avoid prosecution, assault, resisting arrest—an accumulation of antisocial gestures that make fascinating reading in the Water Street Post Office. A kid, I said to myself. A wife.

"What're you doing here, Jimmy?"

The silence went on long enough to be important.

"Actually, I'm not going to be here long—you don't need to know where I'm going—but I need a favor."

I was concentrating on my coffee cup—how hot it was, how old. It had elephants in different positions that

looked like sex, a gift from Mary Jane Byrd, and was meant to be the first funny thing we'd see in the morning.

"I'm meeting Carla," he said. "She and Ruth are driving over here from Tucson."

"That's where they live?"

"It doesn't matter where they live, Buddy. We do this reunion bit pretty frequently—a sentiment thing. I thought you wouldn't mind."

I took note of what is heard hereabouts at two in the morning: the wind, a wall clock, my mostly paid-for house taking its own pulse, the Fletchers' three-legged shepherd in their onion field.



"There's something else, isn't there?"

"We'll be out by daybreak. Maybe a little later."

Eight at the latest, I told him. My loan officer, Victor Fears, from the Citizen's Bank, was coming out at nine. I had a pile of debt and, at the moment, only a half dozen payment books to show for it.

"Right on, Buddy," Jimmy said. "I knew I could count on you."

"I'm doing a lot of dumb stuff lately."

He stood at the stove now, and I thought of him as he had been at fifteen—too skinny through the chest, full of jokes about what a smooth operator he was.

"You're like me, man," he was saying. "I stole all my ideas from the Lone Ranger—goodness against evil and injustice. And never shoot to kill."

AN HOUR LATER WE SAT IN MY BUICK STATION WAGON outside his old house on Amador Street, so that he could teach me about the property fetish that underlies genocidal war. His old house stood dark (his dad had died two years earlier), almost concealed by new landscaping, and Jimmy was telling me that the olden times, the hard rain, the winds that Bob Dylan sang about, were coming back.

"Nicaragua," he said. "Salvador, people in the streets."

I had mentioned what Mary Jane Byrd said men were—which had to do with not looking around yourself carefully and being pigheaded in matters of the heart.

"What's it feel like?" I asked.

He was looking at his hands as if they held a surprise for him.

"The violence," I said. "What's it like?"

"You get used to it," he said. "You abstract, invent stories."

In Jimmy's old house lived the Whittiers, a family I had met twice and now seemed connected to by something deeper than happenstance or the running forward of our lives.

"First time," he said, "I wet my pants. The rush was incredible, just movement and light and voices. Then everybody—the citizens, Ma and Pa Kettle—everybody does what you say. It's hard to understate a feeling like that."

His words were piling up like stones.

"It used to be fun, a party."

"And now?"

He shrugged.

"Now it's work, a job." He had a cigarette going.

"Sometimes I have to remind myself what it's for, who the enemy is."

TRAFFIC WATCH

As always it is late, the freeways
trickling with late drivers
kept in town by the impossible

debt, the mortgage that falls due
every second, kept late by fears
of home—house and family

ready to swallow them one button
at a time, paycheck by
paycheck. Looking down I follow

their quiet lights nosing along
like insects as they look for
the one driveway that will take

them in. I see them pull into
garages with great stealth
in order to keep the tools asleep—

mowers slumped in winter hibernation,
ladders in attitudes of prayer.
There is the click of the door

and the aching pause as the road
plucks at their sleeves
to call them back—one more drink,

that smile across the room, the safe
limbo of the dark bar.
But it is too late and they re-enter

the dreaded door, trying to remember
the story they should tell of lateness
and despair, the one they never tell

and never will, of how the worm
of hopelessness lies coiled in
the very heart of hope.

—Vern Rutsala

The silence had shape and substance. Between us was time, what the years had made. We had been brought together again—yes, like magic—but separating us, as if we were planets, was space we could only holler across.

"I get tired," he was saying. "Sometimes I don't know who I am."

I knew that feeling, I thought.

"A fugitive's brain is filled with data," he was saying. "A hundred names, numbers, lots of ID. Revolution requires a first-class memory."

He told me he'd been L. Manning Vines, from Sioux City, Iowa; blood type O; born August 13, 1948. And Archie Felts, from Atlanta, whose father was Ira, whose mother was Velma, who had brothers named Bert and Maxwell. The invented past piled up: a hundred jobs, a deck of Social Security cards, made-up work records, biographies borrowed from *Seize the Day* and *The Old Curiosity Shop*, surnames from the *Guinness Book of World Records*. Everything was faked: whole families imagined, breathed into life for an interview, a license check. "I got a whole population in my head," he said. Family trees that stretched back to England and France and goddamn Holland, a story that put him in one place and not another, mirages he inhabited for an hour, a month, a bus ride. One part of him belonged to an Elks Club in Missouri, another to a YMCA Big Brothers program in Columbus, Ohio. He was a fifth-grade teacher, a bricklayer in Union City. A part of him—a part as impossible as men on Mars—owed money; a part had stock in Biogen.

"I've even been you," he said. "For two days, a long time ago, I was Joe Benson Neville, Jr. You were a mean son-of-a-bitch then, Buddy, but you were exceedingly happy."

I understood then why he was really here—and as if it had already happened, as if I'd already read the newspapers or watched the six o'clock broadcast from KTSM in El Paso, I could see the smoke, the confusion, a person like me going every whichaway in a daze.

"Where?" I said.

"Close," he said. "Very close."

I took a second, attended to the thud my heart made and the way my breathing worked.

"Nobody'll get hurt, right?" I asked. "This is important to me."

A car drove by and his face filled up with light—a new nose, shapes from a geometrist's mind, what emotion is.

"A few hours from now," he began, "an invented PFC named Blocker, from Peoria, Illinois, will strike a blow for the Great Blah-Blah-Blah. It will be dramatic, telegenic, but very modest in terms of property loss. It's the eighties, man—blood isn't the issue anymore."

I had the car started. We could go now, I thought. Or we could still be here when the sun came up. I had the sensation that I was somewhere else, perhaps in the room of Jimmy's old house where the Whittiers now slept, watching. My ex-wife came to mind, Mary Jane Byrd, and the long-limbed Chevrolet dealer she had taken up with. I

felt fifteen years roll up and unfurl, leading me back in a rush.

"Let's go home," I said.

NEAR 4:00 A.M. A CAR CAME UP MY DIRT ROAD FROM Highway 85, a four-door Ford so plain that I thought I'd seen it everywhere. "Carla," Jimmy said. He'd been pacing for the past hour, quiet and deliberate, field-stripping his smokes. I'd asked him once about the duffel bag he'd dropped beside me on the steps. It was GI stuff, olive drab, official. "Tools of the trade," he'd said. "I'm a true believer, sad to say." Now he walked over, his face blank, a sober man with an earnest mission, and picked up the bag.

"We'll be back in two hours," he said. "Three at the outside. Ruthie'll stay here."

Behind the wheel sat Carla, my garage light bright in her eyes. I was thinking about my dog, Raleigh, who had been run over, and what Carla might say about that. Behind her another. Ruthie. The passenger door opened. All right, I was thinking. Okay. And then Jimmy was inside, his Everyman's Ford accelerating quietly toward the highway.

"You must be Mr. X," the girl said. "Daddy's real secretive about these things, so don't tell me your name, okay?"

I felt something dry and small, possibly bonelike, break free inside.

"I'm Ruth," she said, extending her hand. "I had a name from the revolution—Little Star—but Carla says public schools aren't ready for a whole lot of poetry yet."

She was fourteen or so, and too much like a nighttime-TV teenager to be looked at straight on—the wind-blown hair that is said to be popular nowadays, and eye makeup that maybe covers up the inner life.

"I take it you know what they're up to," I said.

"I'm in the ninth grade," she said. "I stay in my room, or hang out with kids I know. I don't know anything."

We watched their taillights go south on the highway until a semi with its brights on passed us, too fast, going the other way.

"So what's on our agenda?" she asked.

In an hour—after a breakfast I made and dishes she washed—we sang "Pink Shoe Laces," by Dodie Stevens; "Great Balls of Fire," by Jerry Lee Lewis; "If I Didn't Care," by Connie Francis; "Good Golly, Miss Molly" and "No Other Arms, No Other Lips"—songs I had been collecting ever since my father died and the house became mine. I don't know how we got from A to Z—from knowing about terror to knowing what old-time music says about love—but in one hour the big world vanished and we took up residence in the smaller world of broken hearts and now-expensive 45s. Once she learned the lyrics, Ruthie was terrific, unafraid to throw open her mouth and just yowl when the feeling hit. She even insisted that I play the bongos Mary Jane Byrd had bought years ago; and I, exhilarated and cut free for a time, banged away like a

dervish, until Ruthie said, between records falling on my turntable, that she couldn't wait to get out, go away.

"I have it all planned," she said. "After I graduate, I'm going to Iowa, maybe—a real small college."

On the record player the King, Elvis Presley, was telling us about his blue suede shoes.

"They don't know, do they?"

She shook her head. "I get these quizzes at home. They make me read *The Nation* and *Commonweal* and *Mother Jones*. I'm supposed to save the world, they say. Go to Berkeley. Be there when the shit storm comes again. They started taking me on these trips last year."

She was going to cry.

"You want me to turn them in, don't you?"

"Daddy said you wouldn't. Said you were a cool guy."

I took in the character of my living room: the La-Z-Boy I sleep in, the Motorola TV I watch too much of, the Woolworth guitar I sometimes play when I need Merle Haggard's view of things.

"What'd Carla say?"

"She said you were petty-minded, completely co-opted. That's the way she talks. Said you were bourgeoisie, no balls."

My heart did a strange turn, a twist on its thick root.

"Maybe she's right," I said.

So we waited. We sat on the steps where her father and I had waited and watched the new day come up—a day that would be hot and clear all the way to heaven. I had my eyes on the Organ Mountains, to the east, jagged purple spears of bare rock behind which, if my guess was correct, Jimmy and Carla would now be doing their business at the MAR site in the desert missile range. I'd driven past it many times, a bubble of glass a thousand yards north of the two-lane highway, miles and miles of unguarded flatland around it. Inside, from what I'd heard, was a radar arrangement that offered a view of the skies from California to Alabama. It was an eye that missed nothing from above, and I wondered who had built such a thing and who would care if a bomb went off near it.

"I'm not going to say anything," I told Ruthie.

She was sitting beside me, a schoolbag between her legs.

"That's okay," she answered. "I'll do it someday."

I wondered what Mary Jane Byrd might have said about this, and I didn't know. I thought of my golfing pals—Arch Stewart and Ray Berger and Coke Johnson—and I didn't know. I thought about the twenty-six states I'd visited and the Italian food I prefer and the lame-brain way I go about finances, and I didn't know. And then Jimmy and Carla returned and Ruthie stood up to shake my hand.

"Maybe Montana," she said. "Maybe that's where I'll go."

"Yes," I said. "Good luck."

And next Jimmy came over, and it was time to say goodbye to him, too.

"Don't come back," I said.

Carla was in the back of the car, maybe asleep.

"You're mad," he said.

I was practically inside him now, as close to him as that name of mine he'd used way back when. He had dropped away from me years ago, and now I was dropping away from him.

"I don't want to hear from you ever again, do you understand?" I made a fist and held it under his chin, out of sight of his family. "I weigh a hundred and ninety pounds, Jimmy Spalding, I work every day out here with my hands, and I expect I could really hurt you."

His eyes widened slowly, by degrees, and then he understood.

"This is sad, isn't it?" he said.

Here it was that I noticed his teeth. It was hard to tell which one had been knocked out, they were so shiny and even. He was that guy on TV who sells cars or land in Texas.

"My friend," I said, "this is downright pitiful."

IN *THE MUSIC MAN*, MY FAVORITE MUSICAL, WE LEARN there is trouble in River City. There is trouble and it is fixed by brass and *oompah-pah* and spirited marching, and by what chemicals are released in the brain when folks find themselves caught up in the big parade. I had that on my mind when Jimmy left, and I set about to vacuum and dust and wipe away evidence that he'd come through my house. I took an inventory of myself—the growing pot belly of the kind that Johnny Carson laughs at, and the back right knee that Dr. Weems says he'd like to fix one day—and with the record player going loud as thunder I had my house all to myself and to feelings I believe in.

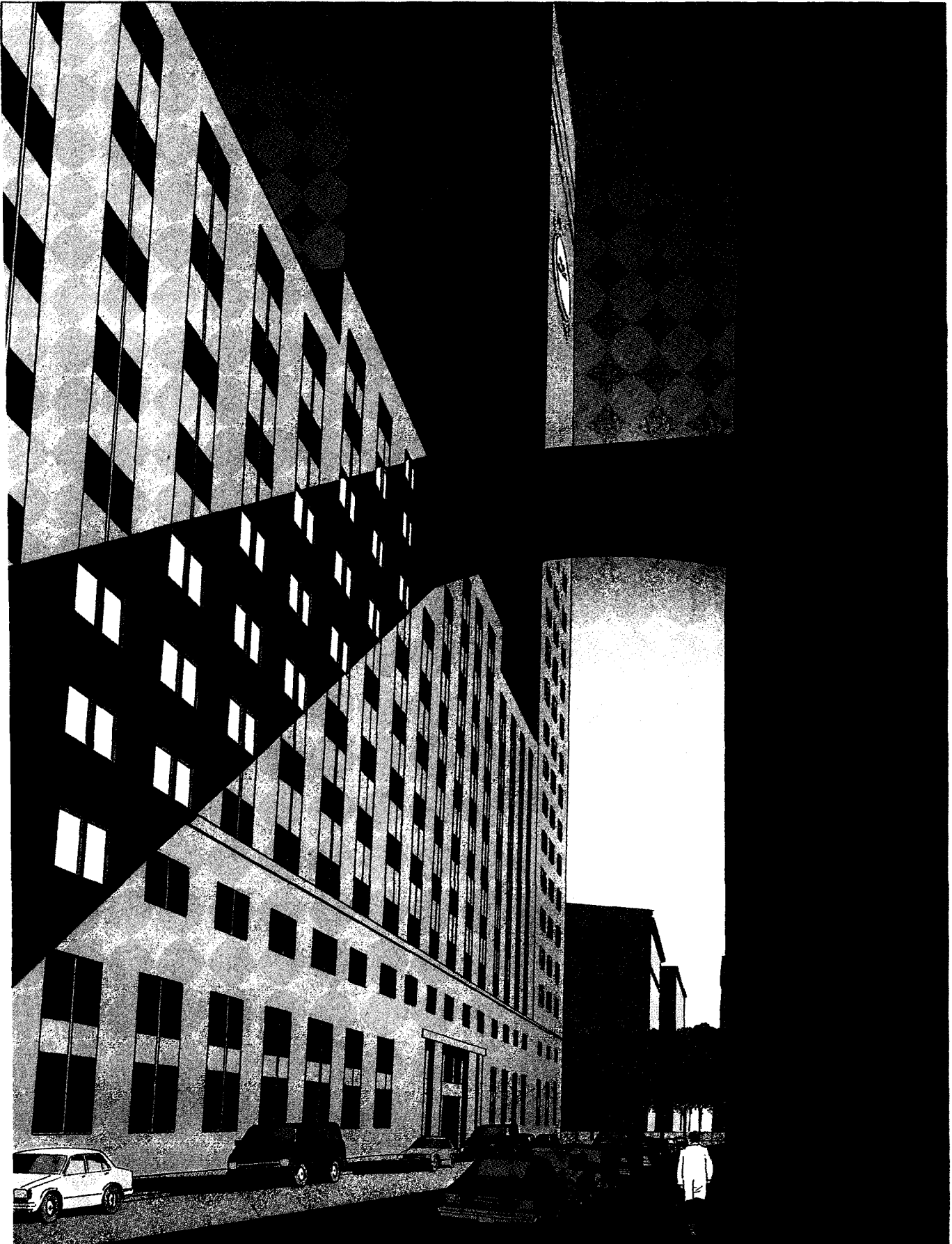
I thought of Victor Fears, who was coming to lend me money, and Janet Miller, who is a Mesilla Park jeweler I sometimes sleep with. And then, the Shirelles singing to me about how it was between boys and girls, I thought of Mary Jane Byrd—what flower she smelled like and how she could roll over in a way that made nighttime beautiful.

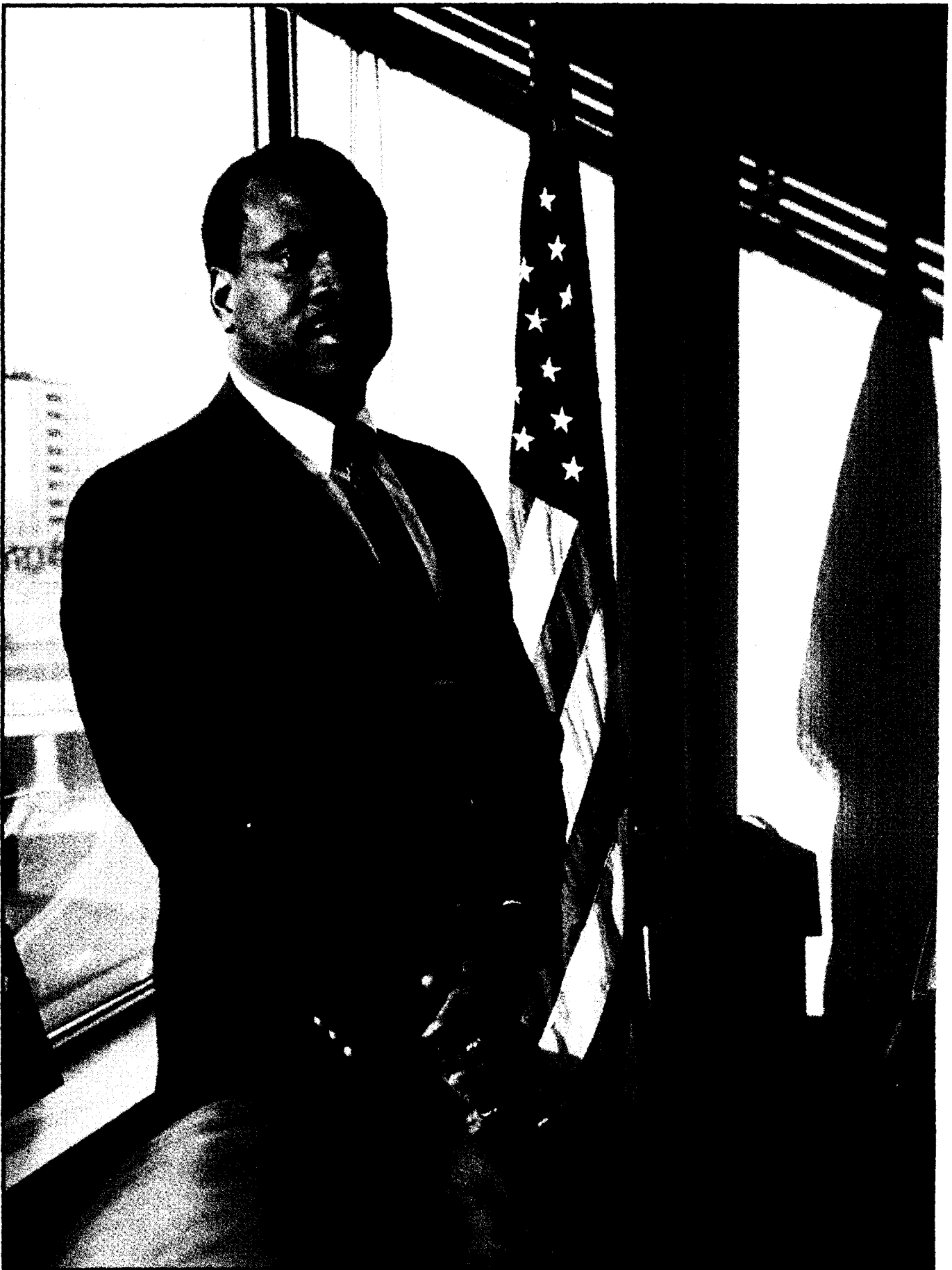
"Oh, Lord," I said to myself and the walls.

Maybe she would be up by now, I thought. And maybe she'd like to hear from someone—a terrible me—than she'd once known. □

UMBRA

BY GUY BILLOUT





*Clarence Thomas, a black,
is Ronald Reagan's chairman of the
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
He walks a lonely road, not really agreeing
with conservatives or liberals*

A QUESTION OF FAIRNESS

BY JUAN WILLIAMS



AS A CHILD IN THE 1950S, CLARENCE THOMAS WORE the ragged hand-me-downs familiar to many a poor black child in the segregated South. In the early 1960s, as the first black ever enrolled at St. John Vianney Minor Seminary, in Savannah, Georgia, he wore plain, neatly pressed shirts and slacks, along with an expression that bespoke a painful shyness. The goatee, the black leather jacket, and the solidarity with Malcolm X came at Holy Cross College, in Massachusetts, during the late 1960s. Yale Law School and corporate legal work in the 1970s finally brought Thomas a measure of real status and affluence. Now thirty-eight, and the chairman of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Clarence Thomas dresses in dark, elegant, conservative business suits. He earns \$71,000 a year and, when he is not being chauffeured in a government car, drives a Camaro IROC-Z. The desk in his Washington office is an impressive structure of polished oak. Behind his leather chair stand two flags, one the Stars and Stripes and the other bearing the legend "Don't Tread on Me." It is an apt motto for the head of an agency charged with ensuring that discrimination based on race, sex, age, religion, or national origin does not occur in the workplace, and that should it occur, appropriate steps are taken to seek redress.

The leaders of many civil-rights and women's groups wonder how seriously Clarence Thomas takes that motto. Indeed, some of them loathe Thomas. He is, after all, a member of the Reagan Administration—its second-highest-ranking black. He is the top federal official charged with curbing discrimination in the private sector. Every American company with more than fifteen employees must adhere to guidelines set by the EEOC on how to train, hire, and promote women, minorities, the elderly,

Clarence Thomas in his Washington, D.C., office

and the handicapped. Thomas not only shapes and enforces those guidelines but helps to define Reagan Administration policies with respect to black America generally, policies that most blacks and white liberals abhor. Holding Carter III, an official in the Carter Administration and now a syndicated columnist, recently characterized Thomas's performance as similar to that of the "chicken-eating preachers" who gladly parroted the segregationists' line in exchange for a few crumbs from the white man's table."

And yet, as I discovered in a series of interviews spanning Thomas's nearly five years in office, Thomas does take seriously the stated responsibilities of his position. He simply wishes to change what the word *discrimination* means in the EEOC's official lexicon from what it has meant for more than two decades. And even though he is a committed supporter of President Reagan, Thomas brings to his job a view of race relations in the United States that Ronald Reagan probably does not suspect he harbors. The President's director of the EEOC is something of a black nationalist, as well as a sad, lonely, troubled, and deeply pessimistic public servant.

Ultimately, he said to me one day, turning away as if to avoid revealing some private hurt, it doesn't matter that black and white Americans are unlikely ever to see each other as anything but blacks and whites. It doesn't matter that a black man in America is only rarely judged on the basis of his character rather than that of his color. It does not really matter that the dream of racial integration—of uplift through education, of gradual absorption into the social and economic mainstream—has not worked for most black Americans, even for those who, like him, have leaped the boundaries of the ghetto and, it would seem, "made it" in a white world. For when you get right down to it, Thomas said, successful blacks don't particularly like the kind of integration that whites have crafted for them in the past thirty years. Increasing numbers of middle-class blacks see integration simply as window dressing; blacks may be present and visible, but only a few have any real power.

On this point Clarence Thomas accurately captures the frustration of many middle-class blacks: people who are educated, employed in challenging and high-paying positions, and yet somehow still angry. The anger is usually inexplicable to their white friends and colleagues. The reason for it, quite simply, is race. "There is nothing you can do to get past black skin," Thomas said. "I don't care how educated you are, how good you are at what you do—you'll never have the same contacts or opportunities, you'll never be seen as equal to whites." In interviews and in polls middle-class blacks repeatedly come off as resentful about their lives in white America: angry at the pleasure some whites take in the progress made by blacks (even as black families continue to take in about fifty-nine cents for every dollar taken in by white families); angry, too, that blacks remain a negligible presence in the corporate world (where such blacks as there are feel shut out of the infor-

mal networks among whites that facilitate advancement).

But while Thomas may share the resentment of other middle-class blacks, he does not share much else. He has his own ideas about how to deal with racism and discrimination, and those ideas have made him less a radical of the far right than ideologically *sui generis*. He does not, deep down, share the Reagan Administration's professed belief in a "colorblind" society, because he believes that such a society probably cannot be achieved. It is unlikely that whites will ever fully accept blacks as equals, in his opinion, and so blacks should prepare to do for themselves: by making black schools into rigorous training grounds, by investing in black businesses, by working for black corporations, and by living in black neighborhoods. Forget the traditional pressure tactics—demonstrations, boycotts, lobbying by civil-rights groups—that are meant to gain a share of power, wealth, and influence in white American institutions.

Thomas's ideas have come to Washington at a time when the United States is entering what might be called the post-Romantic period of the American civil-right movement. Ronald Reagan has won two terms in the White House with little support from black voters. He owes nothing to the black electorate. He rarely speaks to black groups and never meets with civil-rights leaders. Yet Thomas's racial agenda suits the Reagan Administration's agenda just fine. Thomas is an opponent of busing, arguing that black children gain nothing from simply sitting next to whites and can do quite well in their own schools. He is a critic of the 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, which declared the segregation of public schools to be illegal. Thomas thinks that the Court's ruling was based on the assumption that any all-black school had to be inferior to an integrated school. (Thomas a single parent, sends his son to an integrated private school in the Washington suburbs but insists that whether the school is integrated, all-black, or virtually all-white is irrelevant, and that he chose the school he did only in the interest of obtaining the best education for his son. Thomas is also against affirmative action to get more blacks into U.S. corporations, contending that affirmative action—meaning goals and timetables for employers who have hired few, or have never hired, blacks—not only is window dressing but also has failed to help the mass of poor black people get into the mainstream economy. Affirmative action, he believes, has primarily meant more money for a few qualified blacks, usually the scions of the already well-to-do. Thomas fights angrily against requirements that employers alter tests to allow as many blacks as whites to pass. These prescriptions strike him as "assuming that blacks lack intelligence" and that they "can't perform as well as whites." Lowering standards on tests, he says, may help a few blacks get a few good jobs, but it also puts the federal imprimatur on the idea that educate blacks can't compete, and therefore lends credence to it—a loss that isn't worth the gain. Thomas wants to strengthen black colleges and universities rather than press white

schools to admit more blacks. White liberals, who want to end "dual" school systems in the South, should "leave black people alone."

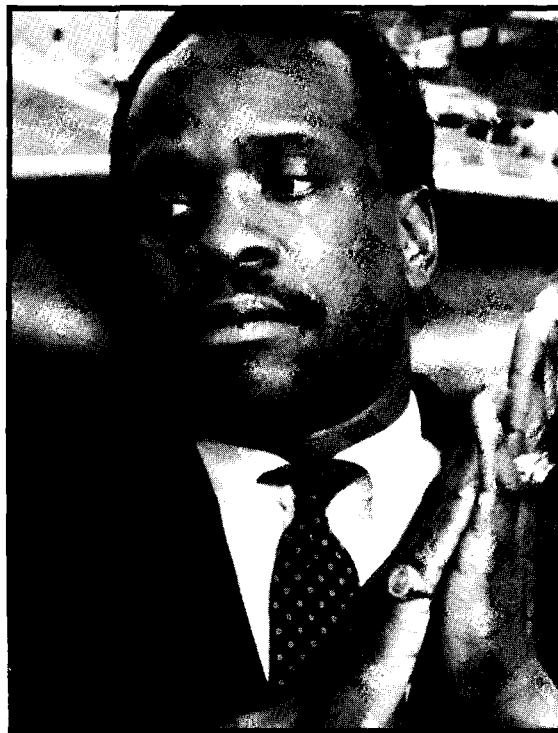
Thomas stands in the tradition of Booker T. Washington, who argued against integrationists like W.E.B. DuBois earlier in this century. Washington contended that freed black slaves should remain in their own southern communities, work hard, and develop their own farms and businesses. Thomas favors strengthening black businesses in which employers can amass capital and employees can make it on their own without the stigma of being labeled "one of the blacks" in the firm. Thomas believes that the most significant progress made by the American civil-rights movement is due to the individual efforts of black men and women, standing firm in the face of overt racism and demanding their rights as Americans. Thomas puts little stock in rulings by the Supreme Court, decisions made in the White House, or even the good will of whites who support integration. Like Booker T. Washington, Thomas puts his faith in the ability of black people to use their minds and their muscles to do for themselves. He quotes from memory these words of Malcolm X: "The American black man should be focusing his every effort toward building his *own* businesses and decent homes for himself. As other ethnic groups have done, let the black people, wherever possible, however possible, patronize their own kind, hire their own kind, and start in those ways to build up the black race's ability to do for itself. That's the only way the American black man is ever going to get respect."

Clarence Thomas, in sum, is a man who does not see integration as the panacea for the problems of black America. The familiar integrationist agitation of black civil-rights leaders leaves him cold. He agrees with Reagan's characterization of the civil-rights leaders as old men fomenting discontent to justify their own "rather good positions." "The issue is economics—not who likes you," Thomas has told me. "And when you have the economics, people do have a way of changing their attitudes toward you. I don't see how the civil-rights people today can claim Malcolm X as one of their own. Where does he say black people should go begging the Labor Department for jobs? He was hell on integrationists. Where does he say you should sacrifice your institutions to be next to white people?"

Above all—and perhaps this is the main reason why he is regarded with such disdain by so many blacks, and so

many Hispanics and women as well—Thomas refuses to see civil rights as a matter of corporate struggle and *group* equity. Are blacks, Hispanics, and women, as groups, victims of discrimination on the job, as evidenced by group statistics on hiring, promotion, and pay? Thomas is not very much interested in this question. What about an *individual* who claims discrimination? Here, and here alone, a black or a woman might find Thomas to be a friend in court.

CLARENCE THOMAS WAS SENT TO LIVE WITH HIS grandfather, Myers Anderson, when he was seven years old. His father had long before left for Philadelphia; his mother had remarried, and her new husband didn't want children from the previous marriage around.



Thomas, his mother, and brother had been living in a room off an alley in Savannah for about a year. Before that the children had lived in Pinpoint, a run-down town outside Savannah, with an aunt. Thomas remembers eating cornflakes several times a day, wandering the streets, playing hooky. Displayed prominently in Clarence Thomas's office is a photograph of Myers Anderson: a muscular older man in a white undershirt, standing ready to go to work. "When the civil-rights people indict me," Thomas said soon after his grandfather's death, in 1983, "the man they are indicting is that man. Let them call him from the grave and indict him."

When Thomas and his brother went to live with their grandfather in Savannah, in 1956, it was the first time that they had ever lived in a house with a bathroom. It was their first experience of three square meals a day. Their grandfather had built his own house, and, although he could barely read or write, he was a strong advocate of education. Clarence could no longer miss school. Anderson, a devout Catholic, paid \$30 a year for the Thomas boys to attend an all-black Catholic school, run by white nuns. Every afternoon at three it was straight home to change clothes and help Myers deliver ice and oil. In the evenings, after washing dishes, Thomas went, he remembers, to the library for blacks, which had been built by the Carnegies. (Blacks were barred from the Savannah Public Library.) "I used to run to the library to flip through the pages and dream. I just remember *The New Yorker*. You know, what did I know about New York? But I said, One day, I'm going to be able to read this, be sophisticated enough to deal with these kinds of things." Although Myers Anderson was nearly il-

literate, Clarence came to appreciate that his grandfather had not let segregation or a lack of schooling stand in the way of his living a decent life. His grandfather, a strong Democrat, had been involved in local efforts to get voting rights for blacks, and he voted religiously.

Clarence learned other lessons from his grandfather after a visit up North to see some relatives, who were now shelved in housing projects and living on welfare. "He'd say, 'Damn welfare, that relief!—Man ain't got no business on relief as long as he can work.'"

Southern society, both black and white, had another view of Clarence and his grandfather. Black Savannah society, Clarence Thomas recalls bitterly, knew him as ABC—America's Blackest Child ("and you have to remember that for someone to call you black in the sixties, that meant serious business"). He was ridiculed not only for his extremely dark complexion but also for his hair—they called it "nigger naps"—and thick lips. Thomas's grandfather endured worse. "I remember this lady came up to the house—Miss Morgan," Thomas told me one day. "Her husband was noted for being fairly mean. She drove up in one of those great big Buick Electras. Granddaddy was out in the field. You see a car driving up and you always wonder who it is, because we had a dirt road leading up to the house—you see all the dust and everything. She said, 'Myers, boy.' And you could see him seethe. He looked around and saw his little kids there. You could see him seethe. People say what kind of manhood does it take to yell back and get mad. But what must it have taken for him not only to take the insult but the stares from his kids seeing him being called a boy. The most significant things [in civil rights] were things that I saw day-to-day, not the protests downtown or in Washington."

Integration touched Thomas's life for the first time in tenth grade. His grandfather decided that he wanted Clarence, a good student, to attend an all-white Catholic boarding school, St. John Vianney Minor Seminary. Thomas was admitted without incident. He got excellent grades and was a star quarterback on the school's football team. His grandfather bragged that his grandson would become a priest. To Anderson, Clarence became a racial symbol. On vacations his grandfather would take him to the local NAACP meetings and have him read his grades aloud: "He thought I was living proof that black people were as good as white people."

In his own mind, however, Thomas was in a state of crisis. He had never been around many whites. Now he was living with them. He saw how many more possessions they had, how the other boys commanded respect as seminarians in a town where he was at best ignored. (Thomas remembers a quote from Richard Wright's *Black Metropolis*: "But the American negro, child of the culture that crushes him, wants to be free in a way that white men are free. For him to wish otherwise would be unnatural, unthinkable.") Most devastating of all were the racist jokes and slights that Thomas's fellow seminarians made at his expense. Myers Anderson had held the church up as a moral and

ethical model. But, Thomas told me, "After lights out someone would yell, 'Smile, Clarence, so we can see you.' The statement wasn't the bad part, it was no one saying 'Shut up.' " On Thursday afternoons, when students went to town with their friends, Thomas was left alone. Movie theaters were still segregated; to eat at a restaurant with classmates would have caused a stir.

Thomas remembers a "self-hate" stage, where "you hate yourself for being part of a group that's gotten the hell kicked out of them." He tried to fit in. He avoided every form of stereotypical behavior attributed to blacks. He took pains to speak perfectly—not in slang, not loudly. He stressed academic achievement. But acceptance did not come. When he left the seminary, he held a conviction he has carried since: there is nothing a black man can do to be accepted by whites. Consequently, despite his anger at segregation, he does not automatically grant that integration is good for black people. Thomas wants to know in every instance what integration means for blacks. If it means losing the alternative of going to their own schools, running their own businesses, then he doesn't like it. He has too many scars from episodes in which, in the name of integration, he was the only black. Today he says, "The whole push to assimilate simply does not make sense to me."

Thomas's skepticism about integration was heightened in 1967, when he enrolled at Immaculate Conception Seminary in Missouri to continue his training for the priesthood. He stayed only eight months. Martin Luther King, Jr., was shot in April of 1968. As Thomas entered a room that day, he heard one white seminarian say, "Good, I hope the son of a bitch dies." That was the end of the seminary. Alienated from whites, alienated from the kids in his neighborhood as a result of having been away at school, and alienated, finally, from his grandfather over leaving the seminary, Thomas worked for a while and then went north to Holy Cross. He paid his tuition with a combination of scholarships, work-study (washing dishes in the kitchen), and loans. His militancy became pronounced. He led the free-breakfast program for black schoolchildren in Worcester, Massachusetts, dallied with the Black Panthers, and urged a black walkout at the college over the issue of investment in South Africa. All the while he kept up a near perfect academic record. Eventually Thomas decided he wanted to be a lawyer, and he was accepted by Yale Law School.

At Yale, Thomas avoided his professors and sat in the back of the classroom. He did not want to be identified as a black student—one who perhaps had been admitted and must be coddled precisely because he was black. He shunned courses touching on civil rights, instead studying tax law, legal accounting, antitrust law, and property law. He remembers feeling the "monkey was on my back" because classmates believed that he and the dozen or so other blacks in his class were there to satisfy the school's social-policy goals, not because of their academic qualifications. Nevertheless, Thomas thrived academically. Sitting in the back of the classroom and working anony

mously in the library, he earned good grades. He was less impressed by the hard-edged minutiae of the law than by the notion that he was competing successfully with the best white minds. Yale gave him renewed confidence even as he was, in effect, hiding his face to avoid calling attention to his race. Confusion and contradiction reigned in his life. He felt alienated from a system that was trying to open itself to him, and became more of a loner than he had been before.

Even as Thomas turned inward, he was being urged into a position of leadership by other black students, who were pressing Yale to accept more blacks. Thomas did not take the assignment. He saw that many of the blacks who started Yale Law School did not graduate. Most of those who did graduate were the sons and daughters of black lawyers, doctors, and teachers. Thomas could not justify leading protests to get more Yale law degrees for middle-class blacks. "If quotas help you, fine," he has told me. "If they make your life wonderful, fine. If they get you a BMW or Mercedes, say that is why you want quotas. Man, quotas are for the black middle class. But look at what's happening to the masses. Those are my people. They are just where they were before any of these policies."

At the end of law school Thomas felt no debt to whites at Yale for allowing a black man from a poor family to go to school there. The suggestion that his education is proof of the good done by affirmative-action policies, executed in good faith to end the harmful cycle of broken families, bad schools, and unemployment, angers him. "I don't think black people are indebted to anybody for anything. Nobody has done us any favors in this country, buddy. This thing about how they let me into Yale—that kind of stuff offends me. All they did was stop stopping us."

As Yale ended and job interviews began, Thomas found himself singled out again. Recruiters from top firms kept mentioning that their firms would allow him to do pro bono work. He bolted from some interviews in anger. White students told him pro bono work was not mentioned in their interviews. "I went to law school to be a lawyer, not a social worker. If I want to be a social worker, I'll do it on my own time." Thomas ultimately took a job with another Yale alumnus, John Danforth, now a U.S. senator out at the time Missouri's Republican attorney general. Danforth didn't mention pro bono work. He promised Thomas no special treatment because of his race. Thomas became counsel to the state department of revenue and the tax commission. He avoided work on any racial issues, insisting that he would be judged a second-rate intellect by people who would assume that he was involved only because he was black. "Danforth was a good guy," Thomas said once. "He ignored the hell out of me."

Thomas worked for the State of Missouri for almost three years, and then went to work for Monsanto, the chemical company. In 1979 he rejoined Danforth, in the Senator's Washington office, again working on non-civil-rights issues, such as energy and the environment. And he became a Republican.

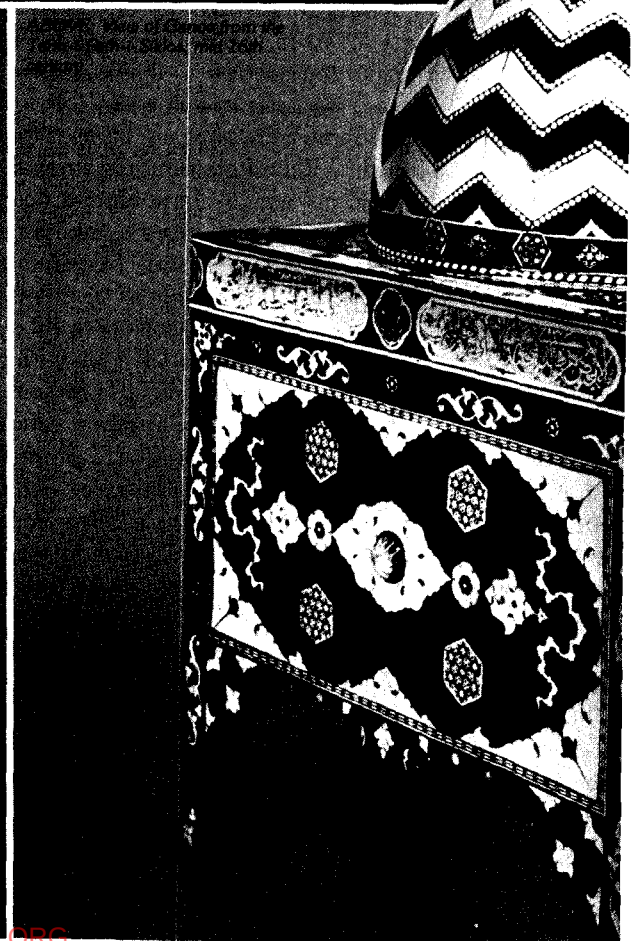
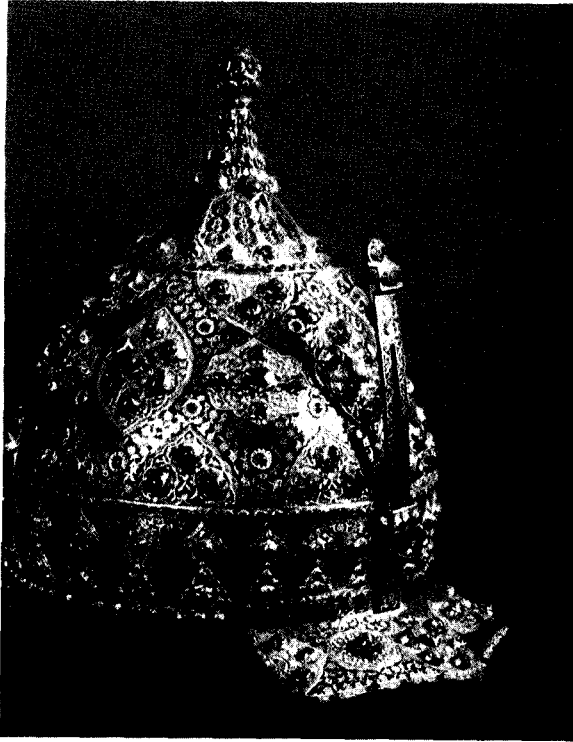
A MONTH BEFORE RONALD REAGAN'S FIRST INAUGURATION Clarence Thomas paid his way to San Francisco for a conference of black conservatives. Reagan's overwhelming election victory, won with almost no black support, had put the spotlight on the few blacks who counted themselves in his camp. Except for Thomas Sowell, the economist, most of the black conservatives were, like Thomas, relatively unknown. They took gleefully to the sudden attention from the press. I was then an editorial writer for *The Washington Post*, and I flew to San Francisco to hear the policy arguments being made by Ronald Reagan's black admirers.

Thomas was the most interesting of a very self-important crowd, because he was so brutally candid. In discussing welfare policy he explained that his opposition to public assistance was an outgrowth of his sister's experience on welfare in Georgia. "She gets mad when the mailman is late with her welfare check," he said. "That is how dependent she is. What's worse is that now her kids feel entitled to the check too. They have no motivation for doing better or getting out of that situation." His frankness in reflecting on his own position as a black conservative is, in retrospect, touched by irony. "If I ever went to work for the EEOC or did anything directly connected with blacks, my career would be irreparably ruined. The monkey would be on my back to prove that I didn't have the job because I'm black. People meeting me for the first time would automatically dismiss my thinking as second-rate."

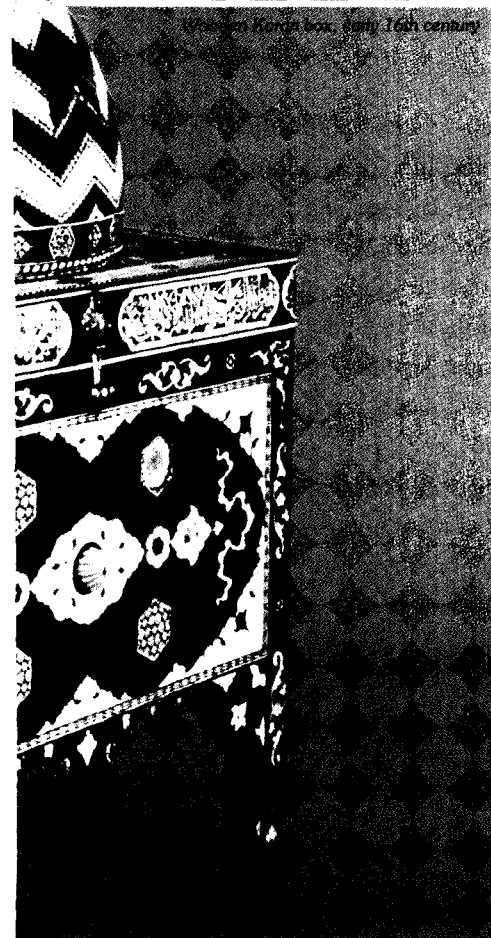
I wrote a column for the *Post* about Thomas that drew the attention of the Reagan transition team. Various jobs in the Administration were discussed. Thomas, however, was reluctant to move to the executive branch. The column had attracted as much criticism from the left as interest from the right. Thomas was uncomfortable. Finally, though, in May of 1981, despite his misgivings, he joined the Administration as the Department of Education's assistant secretary for civil rights. He kept a low profile and generally avoided the press. But he stirred controversy among civil-rights activists from the start. For example, he set out rather quickly to overturn the government's policy of pressing southern states to unify their separate white and black college systems, arguing that an end to the so-called dual system would mean an end to the historically black colleges that had educated a majority of the nation's black professionals. Civil-rights groups saw him as playing into the hands of southern white separatists. Thomas did not have time to ride out the storm. Eight months after he began his job at the Department of Education, the President nominated him to head the EEOC. He became the only black with any real power in the Reagan Administration on matters involving civil rights. (Clarence Pendleton, the chairman of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, is empowered only to conduct studies and make recommendations.)

Soon after Thomas's nomination he and I began meeting regularly for informal conversations, most of them on the record. I was by then a White House correspondent,

They built



the bridge.



These are some examples of the art of a great empire and a great people that Americans know very little about. They are part of a stunning exhibition entitled "The Age of Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent." It will appear at three of the most prestigious museums in the country.

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National Tour:

National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, January 25, 1987-May 17, 1987
The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL., June 13, 1987-September 7, 1987
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, N.Y., October 4, 1987-January 17, 1988

and Thomas thought that the conversations would be advantageous to him. Eventually we began to talk easily and at length. He was outspoken and frank in discussing his shifting thoughts on civil rights, his frustrations, and his worries about his status within the Administration.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was created by the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as a means to enforce statutory prohibitions against job discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, or national origin. The commission has five members, who review every case recommended by the EEOC's general counsel as possible material for a lawsuit. All the members are political appointees. As the chairman, Thomas oversees the agency's lawyers and regulators—a significant source of influence. The EEOC's power is limited to investigating a charge and seeking a settlement with the employer. The agency can subpoena evidence, take testimony, and file suit on behalf of a defendant or a class of defendants. The EEOC cannot itself fine or penalize the employer any other way. The agency also has a congressional mandate to deal with employer discrimination on the basis of age, as well as to investigate violations of the Equal Pay Act (which requires that equal pay be given to persons doing the same job).

Should General Motors be prodded to train more women welders? Should companies, reasoning that older workers have pension income to make up for a loss of salary, be allowed to lay off the elderly first? Are secretaries being

paid less than janitors because secretarial work is a traditionally female occupation? Should a business be permitted to promote blacks who don't pass qualifying tests, on the grounds that five times as many blacks as whites fail such tests? These are the kinds of questions that come before the EEOC. For more than two decades an established part of American corporate life has consisted in trying to keep the EEOC at bay. Last year the commission processed 66,000 complaints. Whether the EEOC files a lawsuit in any particular case depends largely on Clarence Thomas's conception of fairness.

Thomas told me a story from his boyhood to illustrate what fairness means to him. He was on the back porch playing blackjack for pennies with some other boys. As the game went on, one boy kept winning. Thomas finally saw how: the cards were marked. The game was stopped. There were angry words. Cards were thrown. From all sides fast fists snatched back lost money. There could be no equitable redistribution of the pot. The strongest, fastest hands, including those of the boy who had been cheating, got most of the pile of pennies. Some of the boy didn't get their money back. The cheater was threatened. The boys who snatched pennies that they had not lost were also threatened. But no one really wanted to fight—they wanted to keep playing cards. So a different deck was brought out and shuffled, and the game resumed with simple promise of no more cheating.

LIKEWISE

The pond is like a mackerel skin tonight,
the mackerel like a beaded evening bag.
This is like that, that is like this, oh,
let's call the whole thing off and take it straight:
nothing is like anything else.
Even the parrot and the apish ape
mirror, mimic, and do like—unmatched.
To begin: algae, abalone, alewife—
each the spitting image of itself.
Likewise beetles (potato, scarab, and whirligig).
Nothing even comes close to barrel cactus;
nothing is more original than a bog,
more rare than the cougar and crane
save all the above named.
I've never seen anything like it—dustbowls, deer,
the descent of man and estuaries,
flakes of snow (no two like), fire,
flax, gannets, and gulls.
Honeybees and the Hoover Dam

are unique—there is nothing like a dam.
Ditto inbreeding, ice ages, industrialization,
joshua trees, lagoons, and the law
that to liken a lichen is tautological.
Indeed, the rule of diminishing simile holds
that all of these are idiosyncrasies:
the Leakeys, legumes, maize, marsupials, and moos.
Virtually nothing is extraneous here—
not orchids, ooze, pampas, nor peat.
This is the world of plenitude and power—
every bit of it out of this world:
the rain and rattlers, sperm, swamps, and swans.
As we now inch toward an end—vectors
and a winter that figures to be like no other,
say the selfsame earth is to your liking
and let us continue—yeast, yuccas, zoons,
all things like, beyond compare.

—Emily Hiestand

That story, Thomas said, is a lot like the story of race relations in America. Whites had an unfair advantage. But in 1964, with the passage of the Civil Rights Act, the government stopped the cheating. The question now is, Should the government return the ill-gotten gains to the losers—the blacks, the Hispanics, and the women who were cheated by racism and sexism? Does fairness mean reaching back into the nation's past to undo the damage? Is the son entitled to recompense if the mother was a brilliant businesswoman who could not find a bank that would lend her money? How about the grandson of a black doctor who never earned as much as white practitioners but lived the life of the elite among blacks? Should American businesses have to compensate for the legacy of slavery—the poor, undereducated blacks living in dreary, stultifying ghettos that perpetuate perverse values? How would society, especially the society of government and business, make amends, even if making amends were its fervent goal?

Thomas believes that government simply cannot make amends, and therefore should not try. The best it can do is to deal a clean deck and let the game resume, enforcing the rules as they have now come to be understood. "There is no governmental solution," Thomas said. "It hasn't been used on any group. And I will ask those who proffer a governmental solution to show me which group in the history of this country was pulled up and put into the mainstream of the economy with governmental programs. The Irish weren't. The Jews weren't. Use what was used to get others into the economy. Show us the precedent for all this experimentation on our race."

He returned to the idea of the cheater on the porch: "I would be lying to you if I said that I didn't want sometimes to be able to cheat in favor of those of us who were cheated. But you have to ask yourself whether, in doing that, you do violence to the safe harbor, and that is the Constitution, which says you are to protect an individual's rights no matter what. Once you say that we can violate somebody else's rights in order to make up for what happened to blacks or other races or other groups in history, then are you setting a precedent for having certain circumstances in which you can overlook another person's rights?"

Individuals who are proven victims of discrimination have Clarence Thomas's EEOC on their side in the fight. But people who argue that they are victimized in corporate life as part of historical, across-the-board discrimination against a group find little sympathy at his agency. It could be, Thomas says, that blacks and women are generally unprepared to do certain kinds of work by their own choice. It could be that blacks choose not to study chemical engineering and that women choose to have babies instead of going to medical school.

If an employer over the years denies jobs to hundreds of qualified women or blacks because he does not want women or blacks working for him, Thomas is not prepared to see a "pattern and practice" of discrimination. He sees

hundreds of local, individual acts of discrimination. Thomas would require every woman or black whom that employer had discriminated against to come to the government and prove his or her allegation. The burden is on the individual. The remedy is back pay and a job. "Anyone asking the government to do more is barking up the wrong tree," Thomas says.

Thomas has made it EEOC policy to shy away from class-action suits. He doesn't want to see blacks treated as numbers. So he favors aggressive attacks on employers only when they are proved to have discriminated against particular persons. "My view is that the most vulnerable unit in our society is the individual. And blacks, in my opinion being one of the most vulnerable groups, should fight like hell to preserve individual freedoms so people can't gang up on us. Blacks are the least favored group in this society. Suppose we did band together, group against group—which group do you think would win? We're breaking down everything, ten percent for the blacks, twenty-five percent for the women, two percent for the aged, everything broken out according to groups. Which group always winds up with the least? Which group always seems to get the hell kicked out of it? Blacks, and maybe American Indians.

"Playing the group game builds up racial conflict. That's what segregation was all about. But now blacks are out here raising all this Cain for group rights, and the ones who benefit the most, I think, would probably be white females, because they are the best-prepared group."

Clarence Thomas has resolved to play by the rules. Once again one sees the boy on the porch, the respect for method and procedure. Thomas is consistent. Because the courts in the past have mandated goals, timetables, and quotas, and because these are therefore the law of the land, Thomas's EEOC continues to enforce (though it may occasionally challenge) such decisions. This stance has sometimes left Thomas isolated within the Reagan Administration. But when it comes to new business before the commission, there is little in Clarence Thomas's record with which a right-wing Administration could find fault.

In "fiscal year" 1980 (October 1, 1979, to September 30, 1980) the EEOC was settling 32.1 percent of the cases that it closed, whereas the rate was 13.6 percent in the first half of 1986. The proportion of cases in which the EEOC finding was "no cause" (for a lawsuit) increased from 28.5 percent to 56.6 percent over the same period. A total of 22.3 percent fewer cases were filed in court in 1985 than in 1981. The decline in the number of cases pleased Thomas. He had turned the agency's attention away from cases based on statistical evidence of discrimination. Thomas was sensitive to reports that white managers often feel they cannot find enough qualified minority candidates. Perhaps an employer in the Southwest fires more Hispanics and women simply because he made an effort to hire them in the first place; the women and Hispanics who make the most of the open door will have a job. Those

who can't do the job will be fired. To sue an employer because he keeps the door open to people who may be less educated and have little work experience would be to discourage him from giving those people a chance.

THOMAS'S TENURE AT THE EEOC HAS ALWAYS BEEN rocky, but it has been rocky for different reasons at different times. His first task was simply getting a hold on an agency with 3,100 employees and forty-eight local offices. By all accounts the agency Thomas inherited was administratively disheveled, with a long backlog of discrimination cases. Thomas seems to have been happy with unpublicized bureaucratic chores, happy to be left to himself. On his way into work every day he would have his driver stop at a Catholic church, where he would spend a few minutes alone in prayer. He does not attend church on Sundays. ("God is all right," he says. "It's the people I don't like.") Thomas rarely spoke with the press. He worked privately, almost anonymously, letting the Justice Department and the White House make political pronouncements on civil-rights policy. In the Administration, Thomas was often referred to as "the other Clarence," distinguishing him from the more visible Clarence Pendleton, at the Civil Rights Commission. As one of the very few prominent blacks in the Reagan Administration, he was criticized internally for his initial lack of a public role.

Once, during lunch at the White House mess, William Bradford Reynolds, the assistant attorney general for civil rights, was loudly urging him to be more aggressive. Thomas snapped back, "Don't tell me what to do, Brad. All I *have* to do is die and stay black."

If Thomas hoped to sit out the war of words between the Reagan Administration and the nation's leading civil-rights groups, he was only partially successful. Criticized by black leaders as an Uncle Tom, Thomas from time to time struck back. He publicly castigated civil-rights leaders who "bitch, bitch, bitch, moan and moan and whine" about the Reagan Administration. He characterized protests against apartheid in South Africa and against the Administration's policy of "constructive engagement" as less important than efforts at home to improve education for blacks and end poverty and drug abuse among them.

Meanwhile, Thomas found himself in occasional disagreements with other members of the Administration. Thomas freely blamed the Justice Department for setting a "negative agenda" on civil rights during the President's first term. He conceded to me that the Administration "blew it" by supporting tax-exempt status for a segregationist school, Bob Jones University. He stated frankly that he was working with racists, though he claimed that this hardly mattered, since, he said, there are some racists in every Administration. ("Yes, there are a lot of racists in the Administration. So what? There may be more here now, they may be more out front. I don't care. I prefer dealing

with an out-and-out racist anyway to one who is racist behind your back.") He opposed Attorney General William French Smith when Smith refused to comply with a twelve-year-old federal law requiring federal agencies to submit annual statistical analyses of the number of minority-group members working in the executive branch. And, with mixed success, he has set himself against Justice Department attempts to overturn certain existing local quota plans for hiring and promotion. At one point in 1984 there was talk within the Administration of forcing Thomas's resignation, or at the very least of nominating a replacement when Thomas's term expired in 1985.

Though it was at first only dimly perceived, however, Thomas was transforming the nature of the EEOC—moving it firmly toward the Reagan right. The fundamental change was in the type of lawsuit that the commission was likely to bring. In the past the EEOC had brought a number of celebrated class-action cases against such major companies as AT&T and General Electric. The agency had alleged historical and widespread discrimination and sought changes in hiring practices, along with back pay for the victims. Those cases ended with multimillion-dollar settlements, and goals and timetables to govern future hiring. Now the EEOC focused on simply enforcing the law in cases brought by individuals who sought to prove specific acts of discrimination. The shift in emphasis fit Administration policy. Fewer class-action suits inevitably meant far less use of goals, timetables, and quotas to remedy findings of discrimination. It also meant fewer attempts to stop employers from giving tests, setting standards, or recruiting in a manner that caused disproportionately low numbers of blacks, women, and other minorities to get jobs.

Thomas held to his version of fairness: individual victims of discrimination should be helped by the government, but classes of people who theoretically were victimized by the nation's history of racism or sexism should not be helped. Indeed, Thomas viewed with deep misgiving any finding of discrimination based on broad statistics—once the most effective weapon wielded by the EEOC. The commission had for many years used statistics to put employers on the defensive for not hiring minorities or women in proportion to their numbers in the pool of qualified applicants. Statistics shifted the burden of proof from the individual, who was charging discrimination, to the company, which had to prove that it was not discriminating. Statistics had been employed vigorously by the EEOC ever since a favorable 1971 Supreme Court ruling in *Griggs v. Duke Power Co.*

Soon Thomas began to look at the use of statistics in the EEOC's own Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedure, which has been used by the courts as an authoritative interpretation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In September of 1984 Thomas led the five EEOC commissioners in a vote to review the guidelines, because, in his view, they had become too "rigid." The decision, in favor of review, shook the civil-rights community, which re-

garded the guidelines as a landmark in equal-opportunity law. It also had reverberations in the corporate world. Lawyers had become accustomed to the Uniform Guidelines as the one and only set of rules for playing the affirmative-action game—for avoiding race- and sex-bias lawsuits brought by the government. The guidelines require that any prerequisite for employment—a test, an interview, a physical standard, or a performance evaluation—result in a selection rate for any race, sex, or ethnic group within 20 percent of the selection rate for the group with the highest rate. If a hundred whites apply for a job and sixty are selected, that is a 60 percent hiring rate for qualified white applicants. An employer with forty qualified black applicants would have to hire twenty—a 50 percent hiring rate—to come up with a hiring rate for blacks that is within 20 percent of the hiring rate for whites.

In justifying the review of the guidelines, Thomas wrote that they were founded on the premise “that but for unlawful discrimination by an employer, there would not be variations in the rates of hire or promotion of people of different races, sexes, or national origins. . . . [The guidelines] also seem to assume some inherent inferiority of blacks, Hispanics, other minorities, and women, by suggesting that they should not be held to the same standards as other people, even if those standards are race and sex neutral.” Last year the EEOC completed an internal review of the guidelines, but it has not yet acted on this report.

Thomas was roundly criticized by civil-rights groups for subjecting the guidelines to scrutiny. He cited the all-black basketball team at Georgetown University, a school with an overwhelmingly white student body, as an example of how statistics could mislead. Would anyone, he asked at a congressional hearing, charge that Georgetown was discriminating against white basketball players?

In newspaper interviews Thomas spoke freely of his disdain for the statistical basis of an ongoing EEOC suit, begun before Thomas joined the commission, against Sears, Roebuck & Co. The class-action suit claimed that Sears discriminated against women because it hired a far higher proportion of men than women for sales jobs, even though more women applied for the jobs. Sears, the EEOC claimed, also promoted fewer women than men to creative commissioned sales jobs. The government’s suit did not have a single named plaintiff; it relied solely on statistics. Thomas told *The New York Times* that the statistics

didn’t prove Sears guilty of discrimination. The disparity in hiring figures between men and women could, he said, be due to cultural differences between men and women, educational levels, commuting patterns, and other “previous events.” Lawyers for Sears actually tried to have Thomas testify in their behalf, hoping he would damage his agency’s case. However, the judge refused the motion to take his deposition, ruling that what Thomas believed, even as the head of the EEOC, was irrelevant. In February of 1985, to Thomas’s satisfaction, the EEOC lost the case. But Thomas has agreed to have his agency file an appeal on the basis of what his lawyers have told him are mistakes made by the trial judge. Thomas told me that he decided to go along with the appeal because if he didn’t, “the liberals would be all over me.” He does not want it said that he didn’t give the case every chance to succeed.

In June of 1985 Thomas removed another potential

source of controversy between employers and the government by leading the commissioners to reject the validity of the notion of “comparable worth”: the idea that people who are doing different jobs should nevertheless be paid equally if their jobs require comparable effort, responsibility, skill, and training. Traditionally female occupations, such as teaching, could be made to pay the same wage as traditionally male occupations, such as construc-



tion. Women’s groups have contended that jobs that usually go to men pay more because of the old-fashioned idea that a man is supporting a family while a woman is merely working for pin money, or supplemental income. Thomas countered that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act outlawed disparities in pay only when an employer paid men and women different wages for doing the identical job. The agency’s decision closed a potential avenue of redress for women for the remainder of the Reagan Administration.

In July of 1985 five congressmen and three senators, including Senator Edward Kennedy, the ranking Democrat on the Senate’s Committee on Labor and Human Resources, asked the General Accounting Office to investigate the EEOC. They were “deeply concerned that the EEOC’s ability to effectively attack discrimination in the workplace [had] been diminished by a recent shift in policy which may run counter to the intent of Congress in enacting these remedial statutes.” They insisted that Congress “required an extensive and sustained” effort from the EEOC against the practices that led to discrimination.

They complained that their mandate was "being flouted by the commission."

With the arguments between Thomas and his critics growing louder, the EEOC chairman suddenly found himself warmly received at the Justice Department and the White House. He worked closely with Attorney General Edwin Meese in pushing for a change in an executive order that requires federal contractors to show that they have made efforts to hire minorities and women. Meese and Thomas argued that the order amounted to quotas, because contractors who failed to hire minorities and women were given goals and timetables that had to be met under pain of losing government contracts. For the time being the executive order remains in effect, however, because Republican political strategists have judged that deleting all suggestion of quotas from the executive order carries too high a political price.

LAST SUMMER PRESIDENT REAGAN NOMINATED CLARENCE Thomas to a second term as chairman of the EEOC. On August 12, 1986, Thomas won Senate confirmation. The Senate's unanimous vote came a week after a 14-2 vote by the Labor and Human Resources Committee to recommend Thomas for a second term. The two senators who voted against Thomas in committee were Howard Metzenbaum, of Ohio, and Paul Simon, of Illinois. Metzenbaum said he opposed Thomas because "he has not brought [to the EEOC] a vigorous determination to enforce the law. . . . He has failed to show the kind of leadership which the civil-rights community is entitled to." The NAACP and the League of United Latin American Citizens said that Thomas was the key to a Reagan Administration plan to "roll back civil rights."

But the opposition lacked passion. In joint testimony representatives of other major civil-rights and women's-rights groups, ranging from the National Urban League to the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, said they did not know of any group involved with civil liberties that wanted Thomas reappointed. However, they said, "given this administration's record [we] have no illusions that a nominee committed to strong enforcement would replace [Thomas]. This Hobson's choice dilemma does nothing to quiet our concerns about the management and policy of the EEOC for the past five years." The civil-rights groups seemed reluctant to demand that Thomas be replaced even as they listed his faults. Their hesitancy carried the day and helped to assure Thomas's confirmation. And at the hearings, which were held in July, Thomas stole his opponents' thunder by telling the committee that he had

reversed his earlier position and ordered the EEOC's lawyers to resume using goals and timetables against employers found guilty of discrimination. "That's the law of the land, whether I like it or not," he said. When Metzenbaum asked about his personal view of affirmative action, Thomas replied, "Whatever reservations I have are purely personal. They're subversive literature now." When some Democrats suggested that Thomas might be merely saying expedient things on the record while off the record instructing his lawyers not to return to goals and timetables, Thomas privately promised, according to committee members, to send reports twice a year to the Senate on the number and types of cases in which the EEOC makes use of hiring and promotion goals and timetables. Despite such concessions, Thomas retains considerable power to push his agenda at the EEOC—an agenda that amounts to curbing federal intervention.

In mid-September, Attorney General Edwin Meese, Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Bradford Reynolds, and Senator Strom Thurmond, the former segregationist from South Carolina, came to the EEOC's offices to swear in Clarence Thomas. It was an unlikely sight—the three white men shaking hands and slapping backs with Thomas. Reynolds had days earlier attacked Supreme Court Associate Justice William Brennan as a man seeking "unlimited judicial power to further a personalized egalitarian vision of society" through racial preferences and a "liberal social agenda." Meese was about to give a speech encouraging politicians to disregard Supreme Court rulings if they felt the rulings were wrong. Clarence Thomas, in his moment of triumph, stood shoulder-to-shoulder with his Administration colleagues. None of the three stayed more than a few minutes at Thomas's celebration. But before he left, Reynolds raised his glass. "It's a proud moment for me to stand here," he said, "because Clarence Thomas is the epitome of the right kind of affirmative action working the right way."

Clarence Thomas flinched. Some of his aides looked down and shook their heads. After all Thomas had been through in defense of the Administration position on civil rights, Reynolds had implicitly dismissed him as an affirmative-action hire. And, worse, Reynolds had thought it a compliment. Thomas showed a look of cold hurt—a look of disgust. He folded his arms across his chest and looked away from Reynolds. By the time Meese had said a few words and Thurmond had sworn him in, an uneasy smile had returned to Thomas's face. A few days later, when I asked about his reaction to Reynolds's comment, Thomas waved his hand, as if swatting away the memory. "I can't pay no attention to Brad," he said. □

MUSIC

CREATOR BY PROXY

BY FRANCIS DAVIS

ALTHOUGH GIL EVANS is widely regarded as the leading jazz orchestrator after Duke Ellington, his career has been mottled with the ironies, paradoxes, and inconsistencies more typical of minor cult figures. Born in 1912, Evans is a year older than Woody Herman and only two years younger than Artie Shaw. But his harmonic values, which owe more to bebop and the French impressionistic composers than to big-band swing, distance him from his own generation. Evans, who was pushing forty when he initially made an impression on his peers, nearing fifty when he attained a modicum of popular recognition, close to sixty when he formed a permanent ensemble, and over seventy when he wrote his first film score, was a slow starter who might never have gotten started at all without a shove in the right direction from the trumpeter Miles Davis, in the late 1940s.

At that time Davis and Evans must have seemed odd running mates. Davis, still in his early twenties, had just completed an apprenticeship with the alto saxophonist Charlie Parker. Parker was the foremost exponent of bebop, which was then still a radical new form of jazz delighting in the subversion of pop-song convention. Evans had been an obscure staff arranger for the Claude Thornhill Orchestra, a sometimes experimental dance band famous for dreamy ballads like "Snowfall" and "A Sunday Kind of Love." It was admired by the beboppers for its translucent voicings, which were made possible by an unusual instrumentation that included French horn and tuba in addition to the conventional brass and reeds.

Soon after leaving Parker's group Davis formed a nine-piece band, the Miles Davis Nonet. Although it was smaller in size than Thornhill's group and it derived some of its phraseology and rhythmic crispness from bebop, its instrumentation and palette resembled Thornhill's—it, too, boasted French horn, tuba, and vibrato-less reeds. Significantly, one of the Davis Nonet's arrangers was Evans, whose orchestrations

of Charlie Parker compositions for the Thornhill Orchestra had a few years earlier proposed just such a synthesis of bebop abandon and Thornhillian reverie.

The 78s that the Miles Davis Nonet recorded for Capitol in 1949 and 1950 (later collected on an LP titled *The Birth of the Cool*, now out of print) were recog-



nized as masterpieces only in retrospect. In part this was because Davis quickly abandoned this measured approach for an earthier, more casual improvisatory style dubbed hard bop long after the fact. This suggests that the *sound* of the Miles Davis Nonet (its most striking characteristic) was a reflection more of Evans's sensibility than of that of the titular leader.

Evans arranged only one of the twelve numbers recorded by the Nonet, and collaborated with Davis on another. Yet the arrangements by Davis, John Lewis, Gerry Mulligan, and John Carisi were rife with what would soon become recognized as Evans trademarks—the shadow play of horns scored across sections, oppositions of low brass and high

reeds, harmonic insouciance bordering on modality. Like Duke Ellington, who is often assumed to have written "Take the 'A' Train" and "Things Ain't What They Used to Be," Evans had mastered the genius's trick of creation by proxy.

But after those early sessions with Davis he retreated into the shadows, until Davis called him back again almost a decade later. From 1957 to 1959 Evans arranged and conducted three albums for Davis that rival Ellington's showcases for Cootie Williams and Rex Stewart as fully realized concertos for trumpet and orchestra. On the strength of *Miles Ahead* (Columbia PC 8633), *Porgy and Bess* (Columbia PC 8085), and *Sketches of Spain* (available only on cassette, Columbia CGT 38220), Evans began to finish second only to Ellington in the composer-arranger category of jazz magazines' year-end popularity polls.

But "arranger" is too limited a designation for him, and "composer" is too grandiose. Evans has never been a prolific composer, and few of his pieces have won acceptance in the familiar jazz repertoire. Yet it is unlikely that Kurt Weill's "My Ship" and even a more indigenous number like Dave Brubeck's "The Duke" would have become enduring jazz favorites without Evans's intervention on *Miles Ahead*. The wistful countermelody with which Evans lightened and modalized George Gershwin's "Summertime" on Davis's *Porgy and Bess* album has since become part of the composition, as far as many jazz musicians are concerned, although one wonders how many of them realize that they are paying homage (if not composer's royalties) to Evans as well as to Gershwin. Much the same is true of the tempo-changing fanfare that Evans devised to separate Davis's solo from John Coltrane's on a 1956 recording of Thelonious Monk's "Round Midnight" on Columbia. The anxious, floor-pacing vamp with which Evans introduced John Benson Brooks and Harold Courlander's ballad "Where Flamingos Fly" on a 1956 date for the singer Helen Merrill and on a 1961 date under his own name recently resurfaced on the guitarist Stanley Jordan's version of John Lennon and Paul McCartney's "Eleanor Rigby," of all places. And it would be difficult to imagine "Spain," the pianist Chick Corea's best-known composition, without the working model of Evans's arrangement of Joaquin Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*, from *Sketches of Spain*.

In one sense, what Evans does is analogous to what a great improviser like Sonny Rollins does when he bestows his favors on Tin Pan Alley. The difference, of course, is that much of Evans's "improvisation" takes place beforehand, on score paper. Like Rollins, he tends to isolate and expand upon discrete elements of his source materials—an especially provocative passing chord, perhaps, or an insistent rhythmic vamp, or an unexpected melodic ellipsis—and discard the rest. As a result, his interpretations have the aura of newly imagined works, ontologically independent of their inspirations. The best illustration of this is his 1963 reworking of Kurt Weill's "The Barbara Song" (on *The Individualism of Gil Evans*, now out of print), in which he translates the composer's anarchic staccato into a languid reverie that is more characteristic of Evans than of Weill, but no less brilliant for that.

EVANS'S INFLUENCE ON younger jazz orchestrators rests on his association with Davis. It can be argued that his albums with the trumpeter—which were commissions, after all, despite their collaborative nature—misrepresent Evans, suggesting that he was a formalist, an advocate of brevity and melodic compression, in a period when other jazz composers and arrangers joined improvising soloists in recklessly exploring the possibilities opened up by the advent of the long-playing disc. By 1970, when Evans finally launched his own big band after several unsuccessful earlier attempts, his music had left compression behind in a quest for greater expansion. Evans's recent output has suffered from laxity. Frequently characterized as an exacting conductor around the time of his albums with Davis, Evans has since become alarmingly laissez-faire. It was often said of Ellington that he could communicate what he wanted from his orchestra with no more than a shrug or a nod; Evans sometimes seems too laconic to make even those gestures. Big bands have traditionally been characterized as either soloists' bands (the Count Basie Orchestra of the late 1930s is the most celebrated example) or arrangers' bands (the Basie band of the late 1950s will suffice). The Gil Evans Orchestra is an anomaly: a big band led by a great arranger but ruled by its soloists, which, given their prolixity, may be leaving far too much to chance.

Even so, few bandleaders offer as

much as does Evans at the top of his form—as he is for much of the two-record set *Gil Evans & the Monday Night Orchestra Live at Sweet Basil* (Gramavision 18-8610-1), which was recorded in a New York nightclub in 1984 but not released until last year. The set has more than its share of bloat, in the shape of a Charlie Parker blues medley set to a funk rhythm, and Alan Shorter's "Parabola," each of which consumes an entire LP side without benefit of thematic material varied enough or improvised solos meaty enough to justify such elongation.

But the remaining two sides are richly rewarding. It hardly matters that the raw material of Herbie Hancock's "Prince of Darkness" is minimal: Evans's orchestral swirls create the illusion of an ingra-



tiating melody out of a series of harmonic vacillations, and there is a nicely paced solo by Lew Soloff, the latest in a long line of versatile players that Evans uses as Miles Davis surrogates. On Charles Mingus's "Orange Was the Color of Her Dress, Then Blue Silk," featuring the tenor saxophonist George Adams, Evans's barrelhouse accelerandos and lusciously vocalized reeds illuminate the erotic turbulence that quickened all of Mingus's ballads (and the saxophone solo has a yearning quality that Adams never displayed with the late composer). Evans's treatment of "Goodbye Pork Pie Hat," Mingus's eulogy for the tenor saxophonist Lester Young, is slightly less successful, because the featured soloist, the alto saxo-

phonist Chris Hunter, relies too heavily on double-timed bebop licks—knowing which soloist to call on is apparently no longer one of Evans's strengths. Two numbers are reprised from an album of Jimi Hendrix compositions that Evans made and that is now out of print. As reimagined by Evans, "Up From the Skies" is a pleasant étude for the entire band, with especially comely brass figures. But the ambitious "Voodoo Chile" loses its punch about midway through, and Hiram Bullock's Hendrix-like guitar improvisation fails to conjure the spirit of the late rocker, whose charm was in the disparity in scale between his bombastic guitar virtuosity and his mumbled, affectless vocal delivery. Earlier, though, there is wonderfully comic braying by Howard Johnson on tuba along with atmospheric synthesizer mewling by Pete Levin. Just the raucous tone of the performance is gratifying, in light of the strained gentility most jazz musicians bring to rock-and-roll. Johnson, who plays both brass and reed instruments, is the ensemble's most valuable member—except for the leader who plays what he once self-effacingly described as "cheerleader" piano.

LIKE ALL JAZZ performers of his longevity and standing, Evans is forced to compete with his past, in the form of reissues. Magnificent though it is in places, *Live at Sweet Basil* suffers by comparison with *Out of the Cool* (MCA/Impulse 5653, also available on compact disc), an album from 1961 that resurfaced last year. *Out of the Cool*'s most noticeable flourish is "La Nevada," a simple four-bar minor-to-major riff that swells and contracts for almost sixteen minutes, behind a succession of soloist including the trumpeter Johnny Coles, the bass trombonist Tony Studd, the guitarist Ray Crawford, the bassist Ron Carter, and the tenor saxophonist Bud Johnson. "La Nevada" is clearly the prototype for *Live at Sweet Basil*'s "Parabola." But what rescues it from the monotony of "Parabola" is Elvin Jones's and Charlie Persip's varicolored percussion. Over the past two decades Evans has borrowed much from post-Beatles pop to uneven effect. Synthesizers have given him more color to work with. But the regimented dance patterns of rock and funk, instead of giving his music more forward motion, have brought it closer to the rhythmic standstill it has long courted with its slowly dissolving harmonies.

It might be Evans's recent albums and live performances that are misleading, not his classic albums with Davis. Evans's lively adaptations of Mingus's "Boogie Stop Shuffle" and "Better Git It in Your Soul," and his brass arrangements for the pop singers Sade, David Bowie, Ray Davies, and Jerry Dammers, among others, paced one of last year's most entertaining films—*Absolute Beginners*, the British director Julien Temple's hyperkinetic, wildly uneven paean to fifties youth culture and CinemaScope musicals, which was a box-office smash in England but a box-office flop in the United States. Avoid the U.S. soundtrack release, a single album that excludes Evans's instrumentals, in favor of Virgin VD 2514, a two-record British import. (Evans is also credited with helping to orchestrate Robbie Robertson's score for Martin Scorsese's *The Color of Money*, but his hand is nearly undetectable.)

To recommend the *Absolute Beginners* set over *Live at Sweet Basil* would be perverse. The soundtrack played much better on screen than it does on record, where the absence of improvisational development works against it as real jazz. But *Absolute Beginners* at least has greater focus than one has come to expect from Evans lately, and this may be partly because it was recorded in the studio, like the albums with Davis and unlike the many in-concert LPs that Evans has released since 1978.

Evans belongs back in the studio, where greater focus is a prerequisite, and where arrangers are in their element. He could go back with his band, if that is what he wants, but he also deserves an opportunity to be relieved of the burden of leading a band. He deserves an opportunity to pick the soloists for an entire album of Mingus or Ellington or Billy Strayhorn or Kurt Weill, for whom he has long shown a special affinity—or even Stephen Sondheim, whose compositions have strangely been overlooked by jazz musicians but whose spiraling harmonies seem tailor-made for the Evans treatment.

Even a reunion with Davis might be possible. Or maybe Evans could be persuaded to re-create Thornhill. Or he could come back into the studio for projects of his own choosing. His concert recordings, though uneven, demonstrate that he has maintained his creativity remarkably late in his career. The studio is where that creativity can best be fulfilled. □

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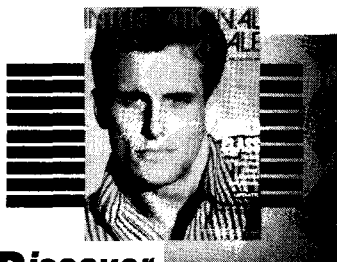
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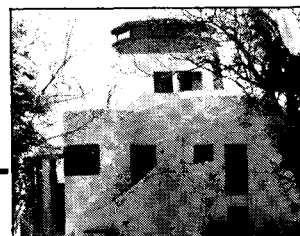
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DANCE

SHAKESPEARE'S SISTER

BY HOLLY BRUBACH

BRONISLAVA NIJINSKA is usually remembered—if she is remembered at all—as Vaslav Nijinsky's sister rather than as the brilliant dancer and innovative choreographer that contemporary accounts tell us she was. Her reputation has been eclipsed by his legend, and understandably: there is no discussing Nijinska without discussing Nijinsky, too. Nijinska herself, in her *Early Memoirs*, defers to him so much that in the end it is difficult to extricate her development as a dancer from his encouragement, her career from his inspiration, her vision from his.

Nijinsky has gone down in history as a dancing saint, indecipherable as a person, a genius cut off at the height of his leap by his own madness, the victim of the struggle between a conniving young ballet groupie, his wife, and a manipulative impresario, Sergei Diaghilev. The impression that Nijinska has left with us is that of the eccentric but stable, small, squarely built woman she was in her old age. She married (twice), raised a family, and was not flamboyant or glamorous or even faintly pretty, with a low forehead, a full face, and thick features. Nijinsky's story gets into questions of homosexuality and schizophrenia; Nijinska's raises no sensational issues and yet is, for my money, the more engrossing.

Two years younger than Nijinsky, Nijinska was born in 1891, to parents who were dancers. Both brother and sister were taken to the Imperial Ballet School, in Saint Petersburg, where they distinguished themselves with honors; both went on to contracts with the Maryinsky Theatre. When Nijinsky was dismissed for refusing to wear the requisite trunks over his tights for the role of Albrecht, in *Giselle*, Nijinska resigned. Having both participated in Diaghilev's first season abroad, they then devoted themselves to his Ballets Russes, for which Nijinsky choreographed three ballets, all scandalous successes. He was again dismissed—this time by Diaghilev, for marrying Romola de Pulszky—and Nijinska and her husband, also a dancer, left the company later that season to perform with Nijinsky's troupe, in London. Their paths then diverged, with Nijinska and her husband returning to Russia and Nijinsky remaining in Europe. When Nijinska finally left Russia, with her mother and two children, in 1921, it was to join Nijinsky in Vienna, where he had been incarcerated in a mental institution. By this time his career was effectively over; hers was just beginning.

What she went on to do has been clarified somewhat by "Bronislava Nijinska:

A Dancer's Legacy," an exhibition of her memorabilia, curated by Nancy Van Norman Baer, at the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, in San Francisco (through February 1), and across the bay the Oakland Ballet's recent revivals of *Les Biches* and *Les Noces*, Nijinska's only two surviving works, both choreographed for Diaghilev and staged in Oakland by her daughter, Irina. Together, the exhibition and the performances convey a sense of the breadth and depth of Nijinska's work, of its consistent integrity.

Among the costume and set designs on view are Natalia Gontcharova's for *Les Noces*, executed and revised over a period of eight years. We follow their progress from the bright colors and busy patterns that would have emphasized the ballet's Russian peasant origins to the somber, austere, earth-brown and white scheme that Nijinska had in mind all along. In Oakland, for the first time *Les Noces* is performed with brown, instead of the usual black, flats framing the stage, as Nijinska and Gontcharov specified. Diaghilev didn't have the money in 1923 to execute them; other revivals, true to his original production used black. But the brown proves to be more striking, more relentless and inescapable.

It has been said that *Les Biches* corresponds to Nijinsky's *Jeux*, a ménage trois played out on a tennis court, and that *Les Noces*, a Russian peasant wedding, corresponds to his *Sacre du Printemps*, a depiction of a pagan Russian rite in which a primitive tribe sacrifices a girl's life to the gods of the earth. If this is so, then Nijinska's victim is the Bride. The ballet shows us the marriage which has been arranged, from three different points of view—hers, the Groom's and the community's—and only the Groom and the community stand to gain by it.

The girls' tableau is domestic and tinged with grief. With quick pas de bourrées that stab the floor, the Bride friends plait her long hair and then shear it, signifying the loss of her virginity. The boys' tableau is exultant and forceful: the Groom and his friends run, their feet pounding the floor, and jump, drawing their feet up underneath them, feeling the power of their own bodies, in dizzying circle center stage. When the Bride leaves her parents' home for the wedding feast, her mother reaches out to her from a spotlight, as if to prevent her going.

By the time we get to the wedding



he momentum has gathered to a terrifying pace. The Bride and Groom sit on a platform upstage, stock still, as before them the entire community works itself into a paroxysm of celebration. Throughout *Les Noces* there are steps, lanced by both men and women, that sway from side to side, like the pendulum of a clock, driven by Stravinsky's churning score. And it is this inexorability that makes the approach of the dénouement so gripping and horrible, like the moments leading up to some foreseen calamity.

THE OAKLAND Ballet, directed for the past twenty years by Ronn Guidi, a native son, is inevitably seen in relation to the bigger, more glamorous San Francisco Ballet, now under the leadership of Helgi Tomasson, a former principal dancer with the New York City Ballet. The Oakland Ballet's annual budget of 1.6 million is about equal to the San Francisco Ballet's annual deficit. At the dress rehearsal for *Les Biches* one long-time Oakland Ballet supporter remarked to me that the dark scuff marks on the dancers' toe shoes showed up against the white floor. "They'll need new shoes for each performance," I replied. "Now wait," she lamented, "is the difference between this company and the San Francisco Ballet." Still, the Oakland Ballet's productions look as if nothing has been spared. Marie Laurencin's set for *Les Biches*, an all-white room in a house on the French Riviera, reflects so much light that it looks as if the sun were shining on the stage.

Les Biches (which may be translated as "The Does" or "The Darlings") became familiar to audiences in New York and elsewhere most recently in a revival four years ago by the Dance Theatre of Harlem; on the Oakland dancers it looks like a different ballet altogether. The mood is lighter, more playful, and, for once, as Nijinska intended—effervescent, as compared with the day-old champagne we've been served before. The three muscle-bound athletes don't muster and flex their machismo quite so much; instead, they strike a pose and simply wait for its effect, with the narcissist's faith that he is having the same rapacious effect on others as he has on himself. The women in the corps still imper, but with greater conviction and less strain, fluttering, giggling, smiling playfully, arranging themselves in winning positions. Decked out in pink, their hats crowned with plumes like the



ones show horses wear, they are slightly ridiculous with their tiny runs on pointe and insipid emboîtés. They chatter among themselves and affect a blasé attitude, which they believe to be attractive. Their notion of femininity, transparent and artificial as it is, is to them completely second nature; it is the way they have always behaved, according to what was expected of them. Their lines are soft, melting, lyrical. But, ironically, the most lyrical music in Poulenc's lush, splendid score goes to the enigmatic, bisexual Girl in Blue, who wears only a brief velvet tunic, white tights, and white gloves.

From her first appearance we recognize how high-pitched the other women's voices, if we could hear them, would sound. She cuts a straight swath through the party, never jumping, smoothly finishing her double pirouettes in fourth position on pointe, her legs crossed like scissors. She has the only arabesques in the ballet—plaintive, yearning, with the leg and arms reaching upward, the palms of her white-gloved hands open. "You must think of yourself as a very interesting letter in an envelope," Nijinska told Nina Youshkevitch, who danced the part with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo when she was only fourteen, "and the letter must come out. . . ." The effect of the Girl in Blue on this party must be something akin to Chanel's on Paris society at the time. Each represented a new feminine ideal, androgynous, self-assured—a woman who has abandoned feminine subterfuge for the more straightforward ways of men.

Most critics have called *Les Biches* a ballet about fashion, and some have

even gone so far as to contend that there may never have been anything else to it. But watching the Oakland production, one comes to believe that *Les Biches* is chiefly a ballet about femininity, and that its subtext is sex. Every woman on the stage is, in her own delicate way, on the prowl, but it is the Girl in Blue who triumphs. Erin Leedom, Oakland's Girl in Blue and an imperturbable blonde beauty, moves through the proceedings with a downcast gaze, looking her partner in the eye only to dare him on.

Nijinska herself danced the role of the Hostess, a woman of a certain age and of the world. In Summer Lee Rhatigan the Oakland Ballet has a Hostess with many of Nijinska's attributes: gorgeous, supple feet, a man's elevation, a fluid back, and brilliant beats to signify her wit.

The only other women in the ballet, about whom a great deal—probably too much—has already been made, are the two girls who discover in themselves the first stirrings of lesbian attraction and are frightened by it. Their duet comes right after the pas de deux and before the finale—an odd place for it—but then this is a ballet oblivious of conventions.

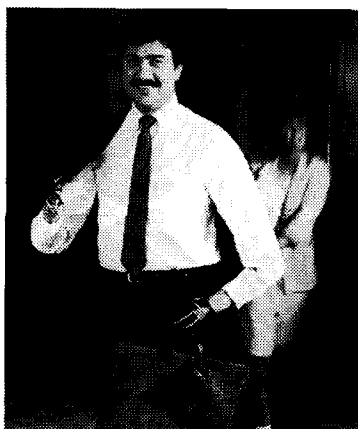
SURPRISINGLY, THE high point of the SDe Young exhibition is not the collection of relics from Nijinska's work for Diaghilev (including original costumes for *Les Biches*) but the scant remains of the six ballets she made in 1925 for her own company, the Théâtre Choréographique Nijinska, for which her friend Alexandra Exter, the constructivist painter, designed the costumes and sets. There are her sketches and costumes for *Touring*, a ballet about various modern means of locomotion; *On the Road*, a con-

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structivist field day with Japanese motifs, based on a Kabuki story; and *Holy Études*, a meditation for icon-like angels.

On the basis of evidence of this kind, we can deduce remarkably little about specific ballets but a fair amount about Nijinska's choreography in general. She evidently conceived of the stage in visual terms, as a shifting picture, and frequently ordered two or three scene changes in the course of even a short ballet, like *Les Comédiens Jaloux*, for which the set consisted of three folding screens, with designs painted on either side, rearranged throughout the ballet by the dancers. She brought contemporary life to the ballet stage, introducing characters who were slightly stylized versions of people in the news or on the street: the Tennis Player in *Le Train Bleu*, based on Suzanne Lenglen; the three athletes in *Les Biches*, choreographed in 1924, the year of the Paris Olympics; the railroad-station Porters and the Modiste in *Touring*. Like many people in the twenties, she seems to have been taken with the then fresh romance of aviation: in her version of *Romeo and Juliet* the lovers eloped at the end in an airplane; in *Le Train Bleu* all action on the Riviera beach was temporarily interrupted as everyone paused to watch a plane fly overhead.

Nijinska choreographed some seventy ballets and continued staging them until her death. It would of course be absurd to suggest that all of these ballets were based on her brother's; much of her work, from what we can tell, bore no apparent resemblance to his. But it was under his early tutelage that she formulated her ideas about ballet's potential as an art form and its possibilities in the modern era, and she remained loyally devoted to those ideas throughout her career. Where Nijinska departs from Nijinsky is in her use of pointe technique, which he despised. She was an ardent neoclassicist, who vowed to further the tradition in which she had been raised, and a large, highly sophisticated part of that tradition was pointe work. Nijinska utilized pointe in *Les Noces* for dramatic effect; in *Les Biches* she did so to contrast different kinds of female characters.

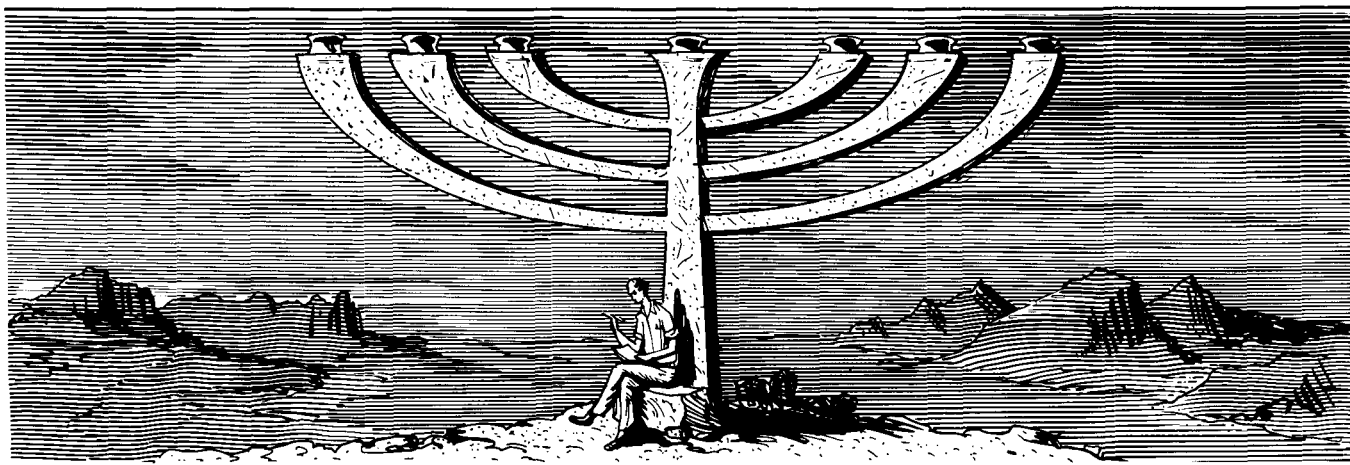
Neoclassicism in ballet here in America is synonymous with the work of George Balanchine, next to whom Nijinska has been classed as an also-ran. But, to be fair, she did share his sense of the direction that ballet should take in this century: away from pantomime and

cumbersome story lines, toward character, atmosphere, and sheer movement. We also know from her *Early Memoirs* that thanks to her brother's private training, Nijinska developed the strong metatarsals and toes that we have come to associate with the Balanchine dancer. If *Les Biches* and *Les Noces* seem to have had no discernible effect on the development of ballet in our time—unlike so many of Balanchine's works, which we now consider breakthroughs—I think it is because these ballets are so obviously rendered from a woman's perspective and because there have been so few choreographers since working in the vein, picking up where she left off. Ballet is in fact Woman, as Balanchine suggested—if Woman is its subject—then his voice as a choreographer is in the third person, and Nijinska's in the first person.

Like Balanchine, Nijinska continually returned to certain dance memories that were for her vivid and alive, and drew on them all her life as sources of inspiration. But whereas he returned to his recollections of classical ballets on the Maryinsky stage, she seems to have gone back to her sessions in the studio with her brother.

There is, I think it must be said, something disturbingly strange about Nijinska's feelings for her brother. She wrote in her memoirs of their work together, in which he fashioned his role as the Faune in *L'Après-midi d'un Faune* for her; later, in his absence, she stepped to perform it. In Russia, in 1919, she danced a solo, her own choreography, a costume that had been his. "Nijinsky is always with me," she wrote a few years before her death. Nijinska seemed to have identified with her brother to such an eerie degree that she eventually incorporated his character into her own: the distinction between them is in her telling often blurred. He seems to have had this same effect—but to a less constructive end—on his daughter, Kyra, who in *She Dances Alone*, a documentary film about her life, misbehaves in the manner of someone who wants to be perceived as crazy but can't seem to wobble her mind around the bend. For Kyra, one imagines, this playacting has been means of staying close to her father. For Nijinska, who had actively participated in her brother's inventions, the court that would keep them together after his retreat into madness was more clearly defined: she would choreograph a monument to his genius. □

BOOKS



FOUND IN JERUSALEM

BY MARTIN AMIS

THE COUNTERLIFE
by Philip Roth.

Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$18.95.

PHILIP ROTH'S new novel is so formidably good, and so perversely surprising, that it prompts a question: How did he get here? How did he wind up with *this*? Over the space of ten books and almost twenty years Roth has endured an odd kind of impatience from the public, an impatience resembling a unique or obscurely hurt feelings. The reason for this seems to me quite straightforward. Roth is a comic genius, and there is never an embarrassment of comic geniuses—there are never enough to go around. In 1969 he published *Portnoy's Complaint*. It was his fourth work of fiction; the dutiful tyro stuff was out of the way; he had found his voice. We sat back, asking for more. And he gave us less.

What *did* he give us? First a trio of formal satires, if you please: *Our Gang*, *The Rest*, and *The Great American Novel*. These were comic in shape but, contrary to our wishes, only glancingly comic in execution. Looking on with expressions of strained indulgence, we allowed Roth his holiday, and calmly waited for the comic genius to resume his obligations. Next came *My Life as a Man* and *The Professor of Desire*, two novels that, it was widely felt, were not funny enough. And where did Roth get off, not being

funny enough? No, *My Life* and *The Professor* erred on the side of bookishness, introspection, and anguish. We wanted the old get up and go. For our pains we were zapped by the Zuckerman quartet, perhaps the most cramped and stubborn exercise in self-examination known to modern letters. As its title suggests, *The Counterlife* marks a parting of the ways, which, though, lead in unexpected directions. Zuckerman is still there; Zuckerman is still in prison (newly reinforced, with extra guards). Zuckerman is still in solitary. But Roth is back on the streets.

There aren't supposed to be degrees or intensities of uniqueness, and yet Roth is somehow inordinately *sui generis*. He is bloody-mindedly himself, himself, himself. The trouble with Zuckerman, the trouble with the self as a literary idea, is that *there is no subject*. Ironically, it is Zuckerman whom we thank for this elusive truth, at the end of *The Counterlife*, one thousand pages having gone by since the experiment began. Hence the desperate thinness, the unbearable lightness of much of the earlier Zuckerman work. How it yearned for escape into the concrete, how it sobbed and pleaded for substance. One felt that Roth couldn't possibly go further—that, indeed, there was nowhere further to go. But on he went, with typical (it now seems) heroic intransigence. Like a dying star, Roth hovered on the point of catastrophic collapse. With *The Counterlife*, however, the supernova has arrived, and it almost hurts the eye.

The agent, the catalyst, is unquestionably Israel. Here is a subject, all right, and it may even be that Roth has spent half his life readying himself to

take it on. He went there before, carrying Portnoy's passport, and the place defeated him: the Israel section was the only major weakness of *Portnoy's Complaint*, and that is a measure of how far we have come. Set against *The Counterlife*, the earlier book looks regressive and dead-ended, for all its savage splendors; *Portnoy* was a farewell to youth, and Roth *had* to say goodbye to all that. Yet Jewishness in one form or another—and the more obsessive the better—has always been the real goad to his eloquence. One could even half-frivolously accuse the earlier, weaker Zuckermans of being assimilationist in tendency, doomed tryouts of inauthentic lives: the celebrity hobnobber of *Zuckerman Unbound*, the flailing penitent of *The Anatomy Lesson*, the cultural cosmopolitan of *The Prague Orgy*. In any event, Roth has now come home, artistically. "Jewy Jews," "Jew-engrossed, Jew-engorged," "JewJewJew": this is the front line of his talent.

The Israel chapters, "Judea" and "Aloft" (aboard an El Al jet), are choric songs for vying voices, successions of dramatic monologues coolly marshaled by the man with the golden ear. "The Bible is their *bible*," Zuckerman incredulously notes. Yes, and it is also their *babel*. Shuki Elchanan, a liberal Tel Aviv journalist: "This place has become the American-Jewish Australia. Now who we get is the Oriental Jew and the Russian Jew and . . . roughnecks in yarmulkes from Brooklyn." Shuki's father: "See that bird? That's a Jewish bird. See, up there? A Jewish cloud. . . . We are living in a Jewish theater and you are living in a Jewish museum!" Mordecai Lippman, a West Bank frontiersman:

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"They are throwing stones at *Jews*. *Every stone is an anti-Semitic stone.*" An EIA security guard: "The weak little shnool Jew was fine, the Jewish hick with his tractor and his short pants, who could he trick, who could he screw? But suddenly . . . *Real Jewish might!*"

Zuckerman seems to steer his way through the cacophony with impeccable skepticism. Shuki says that in Israel "it's enough to live—you don't have to do anything else and you go to bed exhausted," yet Zuckerman shrewdly reasons that here "everything comes bursting out of everyone all the time, and so probably means half as much as you think." In a brush with a wailer at the Wailing Wall, Zuckerman confesses that all four of his wives have been shiksas: "Why, mister?" "That's the sort of Jew I am, Mac." He is contentedly assimilated, contentedly "decadent." When, in Judea, Zuckerman is informed that "what Hitler couldn't achieve with Auschwitz, American Jews are doing to themselves in the bedroom," he shrugs and keeps his counsel, fondly anticipating his return to London, to his pregnant Maria, his new intermarriage, his new life in "Christianism." But it doesn't work out; it never does in Roth's world. A radical epiphany, an uncovenanted conversion, is at hand. On Dizengo Street, Zuckerman has told Shuki that circumcision, like every other biblical injunction, "was probably irrelevant to my 'I'." Practically the next day his entire existence is hinging on that one question, circumcision, the mark of the Jewish reality, "this old, old stuff."

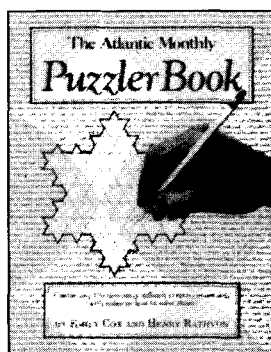
To engineer such an about-turn is additionally necessary for Zuckerman to apprehend anti-Semitism in England: "deep, insidious Establishment anti-Semitism," and to apprehend it, moreover, in the space of a single evening. Writing in my capacity as an Englishman, I am both ashamed and surprised to say that Roth pulls it off—he makes this murky thing happen on the page. The picture is slanted, and confessedly slanted, relying on "a madwoman or fucked-up sister [of Maria's]" (not mentioning an old bitch of a mother-in-law called, of all things, Mrs. Freshfield but Roth detects a phenomenon that is really there; it is peculiarly and powerfully repellent, something like a dir habit of privilege. It is also largely clandestine, and in retreat. Roth did well to hear it, to catch it; but that is how he interprets the world—he *listens* to it.

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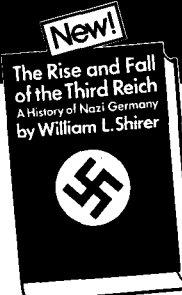
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THERE IS A GOOD deal else going on in *The Counterlife*. It is, for instance, rare addition to the corpus of successful—one could almost say readable—post-modernist fiction. Here Roth is auacious, grimly playful, almost Parisian out Paris of the exile—Milan Kundera, iy). He takes a dilemma and runs it ast two different lives, that of Zucker-ian and that of his “uninteresting” rother, Henry. How brothers “know ach other, in my experience, is as a ind of deformation of themselves”; by osshatching their realities, Roth can ndertake his characteristic search for he real wisdom of the predicament.” he predicament has to do with impo- nce and its opposite, death and its op- osite, with the longing to escape inher- ed identities, and with the helpless diction to a supposed authenticity, the umming up of a self that barely exists tside the perceptions of others. “All I n tell you with certainty is that I, for ie, have no self,” Roth concludes, not ofoundly but with maximum apposite- ss, “and that I am unwilling or unable perpetuate upon myself the joke of a lf. It certainly does strike me as a joke out *my* self. What I have instead is a riety of impersonations I can do. . . .” he joke of a self: it is a bad joke, too, it a funny one.

The book unites in the theme of Is- el, but loosely, not too schematically, it too *teachably*, above all. One of the ings that can’t be thematically uared, it seems to me, is Roth’s entire- personal bedevilment by the abuses autobiographical fiction. For what ust be historical reasons, modern fic- n is unprecedentedly close to the au- ors’ peculiar realities: the idea of the rely gamboling fancy doesn’t appear to t much mustard anymore. Roth has ver looked at these questions histori- lly or indeed artistically—only moral- only personally. How does this fit in th Israel? In its tendency to exploit d gobble up half-formed lives? Well, re I think we are stretching it; and ere is no need or inclination to stretch elsewhere. One equation feels par- ularly satisfying: that between Israel d Philip Roth. In *Ulysses* Joyce calls dea “the grey sunken cunt of the rld.” I wouldn’t like to say what Roth es to the place, or with what mixture emotions; but the union is explosive. ke Israel, he exhausts you, he unset- s you, he galvanizes your responses. his book (wonderfully sharp, worry- gly tense) he is an electrifier. □

BACK TO THE FIFTIES

BY WILLIAM E. LEUCHTENBURG

AMERICAN HIGH: The Years of Confidence, 1945–1960
by William L. O'Neill.
The Free Press, \$19.95.

I N FRANCIS FORD Coppola’s film *Peggy Sue Got Married* the protagonist (Kathleen Turner) is transported back in time to her senior year in high school, 1959–1960, in one of those sun-drenched California towns that seem to belong to the noontime of America. She finds herself listening to Dion and the Belmonts, and for her birthday her boyfriend is going to treat her to a Fabian concert. There are some slight stirrings of unrest—an acquaintance, modeling himself on Brando in *The Wild One*, talks of Kerouac—but for the most part society is innocent of complexity. Blacks do not exist (save as rhythm-and-blues performers), and young men and women know their respective places. The men indulge in baseball talk (Jim Bunning and Don Mossi and Paul Foytack) from which women are excluded, and take the lead in necking in their high-powered, tail-finned cars. The women cavort as twirlers and come to dances well upholstered in thick bras and adorned with gardenia corsages. When Peggy Sue goes to a party, her mother bakes Rice Krispies squares for her to take along, and in school, hands across their hearts, her classmates sing, however ritualistically, “My Country ’Tis of Thee.”

Peggy Sue Got Married is only one of a number of phenomena—the movie *Back to the Future* is another—whose existence suggests that a good many Americans today regard the 1950s with no little fondness, a trend that runs counter to what social commentators and historians long maintained. For have we not often been told that the fifties were a time of mindless conformity, homogenized suburbia, and banal consumerism? In the traditional view the decade was a wasteland peopled by the sinister Joe McCarthy, the vacuous Norman Vincent Peale (a prime example of “the bland leading the bland”), and, above all, the feckless Dwight D. Eisenhower, who, when he was not mangling syntax, was insisting that memos be kept to one page so that,

it was said, his lips would not get tired. Michael Harrington called the age “a moral disaster,” Norman Mailer dismissed it as “one of the worst decades in the history of man,” and the historian Eric Goldman spoke for many others in saying, “Good-bye to the ’Fifties—and good riddance.”

In *American High*, William L. O’Neill, a professor of history at Rutgers, not only disputes this familiar perception but maintains that historians have failed to appreciate the many virtues of the 1945–1960 period. Indeed, he concludes that “the years of the American High were in many ways among the nation’s best. . . . Withal, it had been a time of hope, a time of growth, and, in its best moments, even a time of glory.” The rubric “American High” is a free-floating one, but it appears to imply both an attitude—“the faith that, given enough effort, anything could be accomplished”—and a record of achievement. O’Neill writes:

The veterans and their brides, who together made up the war generation, threw themselves into civilian life with unanticipated success. The men went to school in astonishing numbers and worked extremely hard to make up for lost time. The women supported them and bred prodigiously. Together they created a domestic environment of exceptional health and vigor and a unique if controversial social ethic. America’s wealth and social stability owed much to this remarkable generation, which benefited the United States in war and peace alike.

In rejoinder to the familiar notion that America from 1945 to 1960 was fat and complacent, O’Neill calls attention to some impressive deeds. The country’s main assignment, he says, was to rebuild America—roads, houses, schools—to make up for the neglect suffered during fifteen years of depression and war, and that task “was triumphantly accomplished.” The housing shortage became a housing boom, thanks in good part to “heroes” like the suburban real-estate developer William Levitt, and, though there were thirteen million more students in 1960 than in 1950, “room was made for them all, an outstanding feat.” An “unprecedented surge of real wealth” made this reconstruction possible, O’Neill explains; during these years real wages increased by half and median family income doubled, and the proportion of those living below the poverty

line fell from roughly half the population in 1935 to one fifth in 1960.

O'Neill points also to a number of other gains in this period that have to be set against the undeniable failures. Swarms of veterans went to college under the GI Bill; Jonas Salk and a host of unsung volunteers conquered polio; Alfred Kinsey demystified sex; and Gregory Pincus developed the Pill. In contrast to an earlier period, when doors were closed, "Jews, who were rarely college teachers before the war, flooded the professoriat afterward," and in 1960 the country elected its first Roman Catholic President. The armed forces were desegregated; the Supreme Court outlawed Jim Crow dining cars and restrictive covenants in housing; and, most important, the *Brown* decision and the bus boycott led by Martin Luther King, Jr., foretold the imminent death of the infamous caste system.

Furthermore, O'Neill contends, "life at home during the postwar era was basically healthy." The war generation, wanting to return to a time of secure values, "succeeded remarkably well, creating large, stable suburban families despite very high rates of physical mobility. There was something to be said for the semipastoral ethos of the war generation, which gave young Americans much that was good." Most of the country was "still underpopulated," and "after the Depression with its baby bust and the slaughter of World War II the flood of infants seemed life-affirming, a wholesome response to what had gone before." From 1946 to 1958 the divorce rate was cut almost in half, and the rate of illegitimacy was low for whites and blacks both. In sum, O'Neill concludes, though racism and sexism were rampant, the world Peggy Sue grew up in "was a booming, buoyant, healthy social order that seemed to be improving day by day. . . . Americans had good reasons for being confident."

IT IS NOT AT all surprising that these iconoclastic judgments come from the pen of William O'Neill, for he has never been one to run with the pack. His pioneering study of the women's movement, *Everyone Was Brave* (1969), has raised the hackles of feminists; *Coming Apart* (1971), a provocative analysis of the 1960s, belabored not just the establishment but also its critics; and *A Better World* (1982) diverged from most accounts of McCarthyism by making the sensible point that many of the victims

of the Red scare were not innocents but apologists for Stalinism who had a lot to answer for.

In *American High*, too, O'Neill comes up with any number of eye-catching pronouncements that confute shallow presumptions, but he is curiously diffident about making them. Most of his argument is cursorily stated at the beginning or very end of the book in a series of one-liners, and the bulk of *American High* does not elaborate his theme but offers a history of public policy, war, and diplomacy in which topics too often seem to be chosen at random. It is not at

all clear why, if his theme is "American High," he gives over one of the brief interludes that divide his chapters to inter-service bickering in the armed forces, or why he allots ten pages to the investigation of communism in Hollywood, which he says did not amount to much, while altogether overlooking far more major developments. Moreover, though the points he has to make about American society are, if sometimes too sanguine usually well taken, his verdicts on statecraft are considerably more problematic.

In each of the three national elections in his time frame, O'Neill votes Republican. Electing Truman in 1948 was "grave mistake," for "under President Dewey there would have been no Red scare," which was born largely of Republican frustration. But the defeat of Adlai Stevenson, however estimable he was, in 1952 was fortunate, because it took Eisenhower to end the reign of McCarthyism and clean up the mess that Truman had left. And it was another good thing that Stevenson lost a second time, in 1956, since Eisenhower dealt expertly with the Hungarian and Suez crises, even though, O'Neill concedes, those crises were partly of his own making.

No one of these deductions can be said to be patently wrong, but it is disturbing that O'Neill does not so much cope with the contrary evidence as ignore it or dismiss it, especially with respect to McCarthyism. It is far from clear that a Dewey victory in 1948 would have prevented the Red scare, for many of the worst excesses came when Republicans were in power. In 1952 Eisenhower campaigned with McCarthy, and his landslide victory made it possible for the Wisconsin senator to gain a committee chairmanship, a post that permitted him to wreak infinitely greater damage. Eisenhower also helped elect the infamous William Jenner, though the Indiana senator had called Eisenhower's revered superior, General George Marshall, a "front man for traitors" and "a living lie." O'Neill does not attempt to demonstrate that Eisenhower was "determined" to end McCarthyism "and, to a remarkable degree, would succeed. In fact the Eisenhower Administration was disgraced by the dismissal of loyal public servants, the demoralization of the Voice of America and the Foreign Service, and even by book burning. When McCarthy finally met his end, it was because others displayed a courage that Eisenhower did not.



In giving such high marks to Eisenhower, "a leader of huge capacity" who did a better job" than Truman, O'Neill, uncharacteristically, is following the latest fashion among historians, when he might better have retained his usual skepticism. If Eisenhower was a man of peace, one needs to account for why he or his subordinates subverted the governments of Iran and Guatemala, threatened "massive retaliation" and boasted of brinkmanship, sowed the seeds for the Vietnam disaster by denying free elections to Southeast Asia, vice stirred up needless anxiety about the possibility of warfare over China's offshore islands, and told the incoming president Kennedy that we might have a fight in Laos. If Eisenhower deserves credit for preserving the New Deal, one must explain why he set out to circumscribe the Tennessee Valley Authority and undermine public-power programs, and why he vetoed so much badly needed social legislation—matters O'Neill never mentions. Most important, if, as O'Neill rightly says, "racism was the greatest moral issue facing America in the 1950s," why does he rate so high a man who "did not understand that the mistreatment of blacks was both wrong and by this late date intolerable," who is guilty of "blindness" to the persistence of this evil, and who even, at the time of the Little Rock crisis, referred to northern concern about "the mongrelization of the race"? O'Neill has, then, once again written a book that is lively and stimulating, but it will, also once again, engender controversy. Surely he is right in saying that these were years of considerable certitude, but one wonders why he is positive that this period, which others portray as an age of anxiety, was characterized by confidence and even euphoria." Still, in his comments on American society he does raise legitimate questions concerning many of the assumptions about 1945–1960, and he helps to explain why Peggy Sue might not go back to the fifties. But O'Neill is considerably less persuasive challenging the conviction that the man who presided over the era, though genial and well liked, did not solve the social problems of his age but sought to spirit them away, leaving a later generation to confront them when they had grown considerably worse. Eisenhower was not the last two-term Republican President of whom this will said. □

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BRIEF REVIEWS



THE GREAT FAKE BOOK by Vance Bourjaily. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, \$17.95. Charlie Mizzourin, the hero of Mr. Bourjaily's novel, is based in Washington as an assistant to a Farm Belt congressman. In his spare time he is trying to discover what actually became of his father, whom he never knew. The search leads him through forty years of history and across territory stretching from our Middle West to the world's Middle East, with surprise, suspense, excitement, and swarms of people turning up all along the route. Mr. Bourjaily has a Dickensian touch with characters—everybody is a bit larger than life and for that reason impossible to overlook. They all have distinctive voices as well, a trait that enables the author to tell his story almost entirely through conversations and letters. Cleverly constructed and wittily written, this book is exceptionally lively and entertaining fiction.

THE ENIGMA OF LOCH NESS by Henry H. Bauer. University of Illinois, \$22.95. The author, a professor of chemistry and science studies at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, believes that the so-called Loch Ness monster is a real animal. His book is not intended to create converts to that belief or to quarrel with those who consider the creature merely the emanation of a heavy Scotch mist. His purpose is to explain the status of anomalies, like the monster, that lie just outside the fringes of scientific inquiry and remain there because they "are characterized by a lack of firm grounding in the known facts or methods or theories." Without grounding in at least two of those areas, research into the Loch Ness phenomenon is impossible, because no institution will back it and "there exist no droves of biologists who are free to drop what they are paid to do and look at whatever happens to interest them." Meanwhile, the activities of unqualified amateurs, cranks, and charlatans give monster-hunting a bad name, making it genuinely dangerous for a qualified scientist to take part in it. Professor Bauer's analysis of this circular-rut situation is

engagingly lucid and impartial. His book also provides much useful information for any fellow enthusiasts who wish to locate published material on the problematic denizens of Loch Ness.

A NICE CLASS OF CORPSE by Simon Brett. Scribner's, \$13.95. The setting of Mr. Brett's latest murder mystery is a English residential hotel of stifling gentility with a clientele of creaking relics. His detective is Mrs. Pargeter, woman of amazing resources thanks to the business activities of the late Mr. Pargeter. The combination produces a neat puzzle and maliciously effective social comedy.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THINGS THAT NEVER WERE by Michael Page and Robert Inpen. Viking, \$19.95. It is not immediately clear whether this prettily illustrated affair is intended for adults or juveniles but it is clear that common sense had a part in its construction. No distinction made between anonymous myth and the inventions of known authors. Prospero island appears in the index, but Shakespeare is not to be found in the bibliography. Charles Lamb is in the bibliography, which perhaps settles the question of the intended audience. The book is in fact for juveniles, and they deserve something better.

THE SEVEN AGES by Eva Figes. Pantheon, \$14.95. Ms. Figes chronicles the misfortunes of a dynasty of capable mistresses and herb doctors through English history from the time of a pagan warlord to the installation of atomic weapons. Her descriptions of the surrounding country are very well done, the hereditary lore is impressive (who knows or indeed cares whether it is accurate?), and many of the individual episodes are dramatic and convincing. As a whole, however, the novel is feminist propaganda of the most extreme kind. The male characters are little more than a shadowy mob of murderers, rapists, thieves, religious fanatics, pompous frauds, skinflints, domestic nincompoops, and ineffectual vandals. Far from despising these figures

ws, as the author evidently intends, a
ir-minded reader will develop consid-
erable sympathy for a sex so persistently
aligned.

AMBODIAN WITNESS by *Someth May*.
andom House, \$17.95. Mr. May sums
p his family's experience with the
hmer Rouge in one sentence. "Of the
urteen people who left Phnom Penh in
e evacuation, only four survived." His
count of his five-year ordeal is at times
most unbearable to read, because of its
sistent presentation of the cruelty,
itefulness, and plain stupidity of the
hmer Rouge, under whom "the whole
ciety was working at maximum—and
utally enforced—inefficiency." There
however, much more to Mr. May's
emoir than misery. He begins with a
arming account of prosperous Cambo-
an life before disaster struck, main-
ns throughout an appreciative eye for
e countryside, and finishes with an
expectedly amusing description of
e speed and wiliness with which peo-
e reconstructed their society once the
mer Rouge collapsed.

INWALKERS by *Tony Hillerman*. *Harper
Row*, \$15.95. Lieutenant Joe Leap-
rn and Officer Jim Chee, of the tribal
lice, are so observant of the slow nice-
s of traditional Navajo etiquette that
seems unlikely that they can ever
ch up with a murderer. They do, of
urse, and their cautious pursuit gives
r. Hillerman time to offer his audience
affectionate study of Navajo life and
the strange, tough, beautiful country
it the tribe inhabits.

TTERS FROM WESTERBORK by *Etty
llesum*. *Pantheon*, \$14.95. Westerbork
s the transit camp near Amsterdam
m which thousands of Jews were
pped to Auschwitz. Etty Hillesum
ent the last year of her life in that
esome place, stubbornly maintaining
rage under the constant threat of
ath. Her letters to friends outside
rply describe the filth and the con-
sition and also the humor and compas-
n that endured among the prisoners,
d the ingenuity with which people de-
ved of all resources managed to sus-
n a sense of community. The letters
tain practical details on washing
thes, storing baggage, swapping food,
d contriving small comforts. They
e a curiously domestic view of life on
: doorstep of hell.

—*Phoebe-Lou Adams*

Answers to the January Puzzles

"PATCHWORK"

Threads. a. SHATTERED (anag.) b. PIN-TOES
c. SUPPLE-MEN-TIN-G d. GUNS-LINGER (*snug*
rev.) e. CHAN-CES (*sec* rev.) f. G(ARDEN)ER
g. S(A-L)T-PETER h. TE(QUIL)A i. CH-(ANT)I
j. XER(O)XES k. LE-GROOM l. P(ROTE)AN
m. SUBPOENA (anag.) n. BILATERA-L (anag.
+ L) o. MY-S(T)ERIOUS p. BAN(D)ANAS
q. C(OFF-EE)T-ABLE *Patches*. 1. HEPCATS
(anag.) 2. (e)ATE(LIE)R 3. QUI(XO)TE (rev.)
4. IMP-LORE 5. S(T)URGEON 6. B(OXS)EAT (*Sox*
anag.) 7. D(EMON)RY (*Nome* rev.) 8. LAOTIAN
(homophone of *lay ocean*) 9. BEAR-SUP
10. TRA-I-NEES (rev.) 11. RENTABLE (anag.)
12. B(I-PLANE) 13. C(i)A-HOOTS 14. TUF(FEY)TS
15. D-APPLES 16. C-RESTING 17. M(INGLE)S
18. GR-(s)EN(t)-ADE 19. H(ANGER)S 20. UN-
CLE-AN

T	P	E	T	E	R	T	E	Q	U	I	L
A	C	H	I	A	N	T	I	X	E	R	O
X	E	S	L	E	G	R	O	O	M	P	R
O	T	E	A	N	S	U	B	P	O	E	N
A	B	I	L	A	T	E	R	A	L	M	Y
S	T	E	R	I	O	U	S	B	A	N	D
A	N	A	S	C	O	F	F	E	E	T	A
B	L	E	S	H	A	T	T	E	R	E	D
P	I	N	T	O	E	S	S	U	P	P	L
E	M	E	N	T	I	N	G	G	U	N	S
L	I	N	G	E	R	C	H	A	N	C	E
S	G	A	R	D	E	N	E	R	S	A	L

ACROSTIC NO. 18

"Darwin . . . wrote an entire book on orchids to argue that the structures evolved
to insure fertilization by insects are jerry-built of available parts used by ancestors
for other purposes. Orchids are Rube Goldberg machines."

—S(tephen) J(ay) Gould, *Ever Since Darwin*



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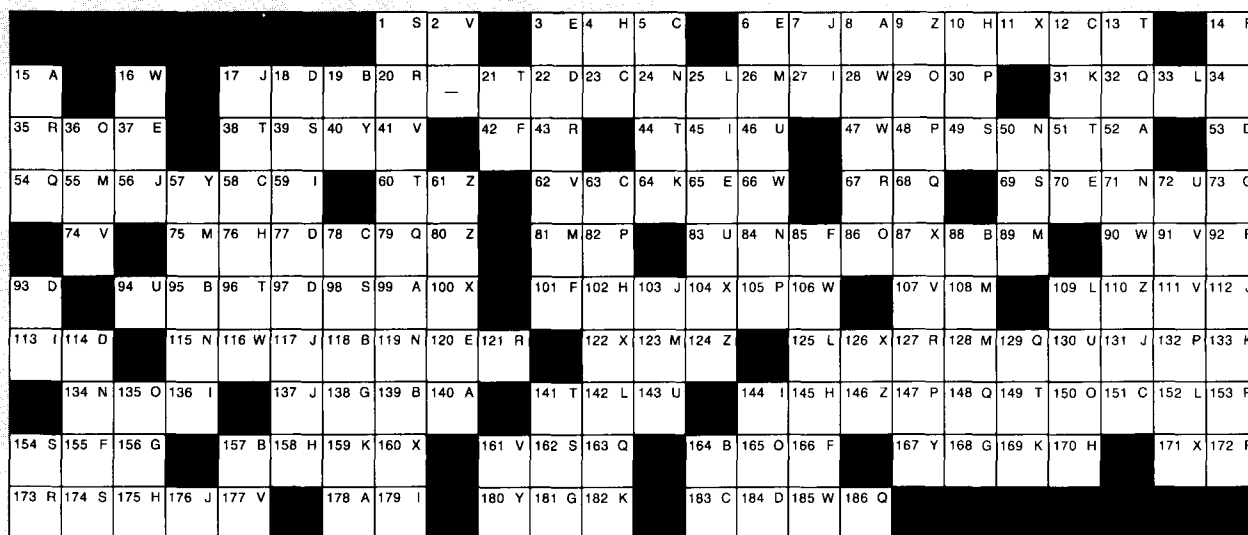
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BY DOROTHY OSBORNE

The letters of clue answers, when put in the appropriately numbered squares, will spell out a quotation. The first letters of clue answers spell the author and source of the quotation.



The solution to Acrostic No. 18 appears on page 95.

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| A. Capital of Brazil's Pernambuco state | 140 52 8 178 15 99 | N. Fractional | 84 24 71 50 119 134 115 |
| B. Fantastic novel by Virginia Woolf | 139 95 19 164 88 157 118 | O. "Sorrow for the lost _____" (Poe) | 165 29 135 150 86 36 |
| C. Disciple of Charlie Parker | 78 5 23 12 151 63 183 58 | P. Wizard of Middle Earth | 132 48 105 30 172 147 82 |
| D. Comedian Steve Martin's trademark phrase (2 wds.) | 114 184 53 22 97 18 77 93 | Q. Sharp (3 wds.) | 54 68 163 32 79 129 148 186 |
| E. "Jolly good" | 37 65 120 70 3 6 | R. "One cannot be a part-time ____" (Camus) | 43 153 121 67 20 127 173 35 |
| F. Eight-line verse form | 85 92 42 14 166 155 101 | S. Game fare on the air (2 wds.) | 174 162 39 154 49 98 1 69 |
| G. Popular singer of Hawaii (2 wds.) | 156 138 181 73 168 | T. In good shape (3 wds.) | 96 21 44 60 149 13 51 141 38 |
| H. Peak period (2 wds.) | 170 76 10 145 4 158 175 102 | U. Cough medicine ingredient | 130 83 46 72 143 94 |
| I. Divine manifestation | 136 113 27 144 45 34 179 59 | V. "Isn't that so?" (2 wds., hyph.) | 2 41 62 107 111 91 161 74 177 |
| J. Carolyn Keene's fictional detective (2 wds.) | 56 112 131 7 103 137 117 176 17 | W. Robot bomb | 90 116 185 28 47 16 66 106 |
| K. Having a large proboscis | 159 64 133 169 31 182 | X. Card game that involves bluffing (3 wds.) | 104 100 87 126 171 160 11 122 |
| L. Teenagers of ancient Athens | 109 142 152 33 125 25 | Y. Party of William Pitt the Younger | 57 180 40 167 |
| M. Hardly a bungler (2 wds.) | 75 108 89 128 81 55 26 123 | Z. Author of <i>On Language</i> | 110 9 61 146 80 124 |

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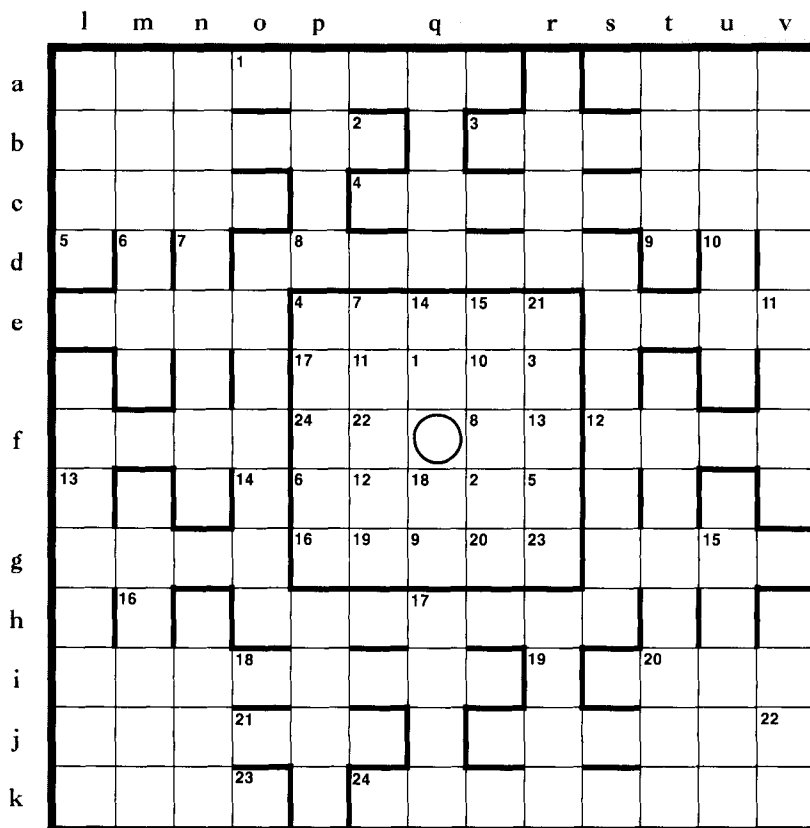
THE PUZZLER

BY EMILY COX AND HENRY RATHVON

THE NAME OF THE GAME

Letters occurring in each of the 24 numbered squares in the outer diagram are to be entered at the matching numbers in the inner box. Any letter placed in the inner box should be circled if it occurs in the outer diagram in more than one square (whether numbered or not). Solvers may fill in the central, circled square when they have discovered the name of the game. Each row and column has its answers clued in their proper order of entry. Note that the eight-letter clue answers at e, f, g, p, q, and r skip over the inner box. Answers include ten proper words.

The answers to last month's Puzzler appear on page 95.



ROWS

Match game I contrived has interior arrangement (8)
 Old priests giving a grunt after mass (4)
 Marine places bomb on case (6)
 Rattle off mostly in slang (6)
 Country kid sits next to one (4)
 Female columnist supplies European region (8)
 Without justification, marinate seafood (7)
 Ran into Henry stuck with no fuel (8)
 Norse seafarer taken in by a man from the West (8)
 Preserve eggs containing arsenic for lover (8)
 See about returning soggy vessel (7)

- i. Goose egg filling hurt one confection (8)
 Starry group caught in July rainstorm (4)
 j. Recess in a large bay (6)
 Top of scale shortened by one mark (6)
 k. Poet can be grind to recite (4)
 Finish off a media promo package for use at the lodge (8) (*hyphenated*)

COLUMNS

- l. Scorn place to relax and not overdo (4)
 Colorless boxing match bothered observer (8)
 m. That's right about copper's flair (6)
 Secret beliefs about a test site withdrawn (6)
 n. Spread over contrary sort (8)

- Bows of ships in the sound (4)
 o. Kosher pastrami sandwiches elevated folks? (7)
 p. One inexperienced about court still (8)
 q. Family MD assumes the whole thing was a bug (8) (*two words*)
 r. Boat carrying poor old pet (8)
 s. Manifest includes one medical case (7)
 t. A gracious writer (4)
 A manuscript including buddy's initial words (8)
 u. Monster coming up—a reason for mutiny? (6)
 Vodka drunk with Russia's foremost composer (6)
 v. Brash private also advanced (8)
 Try one roll in a plane (4)

te: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, send an addressed, stamped envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 8 Arlington Street, Boston, Mass. 02116.

WORD WATCH

BY ANNE H. SOUKHANOV

bazuko *noun*, a highly addictive brown powder containing cocaine, kerosene, ether, and sulfates which is made from cocoa-leaf paste and can be rolled into cigarettes and smoked: "While American drug users are discovering the cheap and toxic thrill of crack, Colombian youths are being sold its even less expensive and more dangerously addictive sister product, known here as *bazuko*, Suzuki, 'little devil,' or 'the thing'" (*Boston Globe*).

BACKGROUND: According to an August 10, 1986, citation from the *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, *bazuko* "gets its name from the bazooka: its effect is instant and violent." *Bazooka*, meaning a portable, short-range, armor-piercing rocket launcher, derives its name from *bazooka*, a crude wind instrument similar to a trombone, made of two gas pipes and a whiskey funnel, invented and named by the American comedian Bob Burns, who flourished from 1896 to 1956. If the etymology presented by the *Guardian* is correct, *bazuko* is entering English from Spanish, which borrowed the word's root from English.

death qualify or **death-qualify** *verb*, to exclude, during the process of jury selection, opponents of the death penalty from impanelment on a jury. "We are constrained to point out what we believe to be several serious flaws in the evidence upon which the courts below reached the conclusion that 'death qualification' produces conviction-prone juries. . . . We hold, nonetheless,

Here are a few of the words being tracked by the editors of The American Heritage Dictionary, published by Houghton Mifflin. A new word that exhibits sustained use over time may eventually make its way into the dictionary.

that the Constitution does not prohibit the states from *death-qualifying* juries in capital cases" (Supreme Court Justice William H. Rehnquist).

BACKGROUND: This compound is one of a class formed by juxtaposing a noun with a verb, as is the case with the terms *plea bargain*, *board certify*, *judge shop*, *profit take*, and *income switch*. It exhibits strong signs of making its way into the language, for we already have examples of the use of adjectival and noun forms.

jogger's paw *noun*, sore pads on dogs that accompany their owners while jogging, caused by hot surfaces and preventable by keeping the dogs off asphalt and concrete in hot weather: "In addition to their ankle sprains and shinsplints, joggers have a new affliction they can commiserate about: the heartbreak of *jogger's paw*. As more runners take Fido along to relieve the boredom of long jaunts through the city, veterinarians report a surge in painful burns on the foot pads of jogging dogs" (*The Wall Street Journal*).

BACKGROUND: The term *jogger's paw* is an example of a relatively small subclass of English compounds made up of a possessive noun (the one experiencing a condition, which is often but not always a malady) and another noun (the physio-

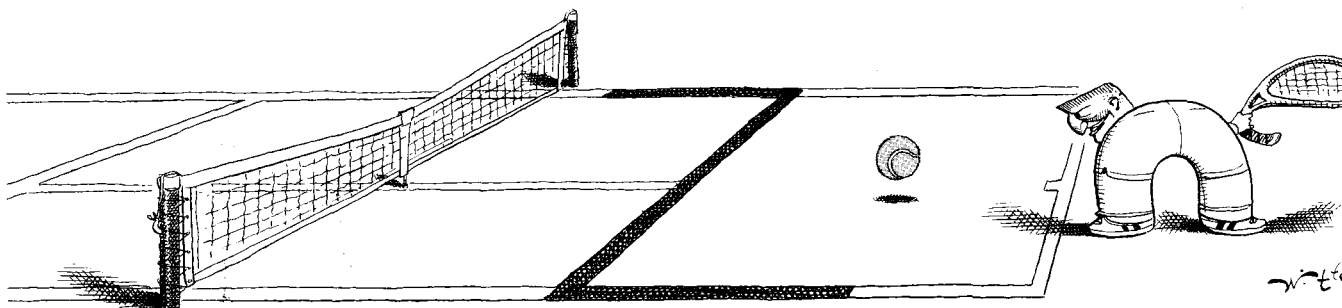
logical site or a characteristic sign or symptom of the condition). This compounding process is evident especially in the language of medicine, particularly sports and performance medicine: *pitcher's arm*, *swimmer's ear*, *athlete's foot*, *guitarist's nipple*, *diver's palsy*, *runner's high*, and *harpist's cramp* are but a few examples, not to mention *gin-drinker's liver*, *smoker's cough*, *writer's cramp*, and *housemaid's knee*.

silver colony *noun*, one of a group of overseas retirement colonies to be built and financed by Japanese industry, intended for Japanese senior citizens who volunteer to live abroad, and conceived as a way to cope with the rapidly increasing elderly population in Japan. "Starting around 1990, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry will supervise the building of overseas retirement villages, possibly in Canada, Australia, Spain, and Argentina. By 1992, MITI hopes the *silver colonies* will be ready for Japan's silver-haired set, which is expected to make up 25% of the population by the year 2000" (*Business Week*).

BACKGROUND: Here is a word to watch: will it take hold or will it prove ephemeral? The answer obviously depends on whether the Japanese government and Japanese corporations, by offering recreational

facilities, Japanese food, and more spacious living quarters abroad, can actually succeed in luring retirees away from their homeland. The citation in *Business Week* is the first we have found for this word.

zone *noun*, in world-class athletes, a level of mental concentration so intense that the brain functions at its peak, the player's sense of time is distorted and elongated, and euphoria and a feeling of effortlessness and certain victory pervades; state of altered consciousness that enables such athletes to achieve peak, winning performances—*verb*, to experience such a zone: "Studies by sports psychologists . . . are taking . . . the mystery out of why Iva Lendl or Boris Becker or the world's other great players always seem to win the big points. The answer . . . lies . . . in the *zone* as the players call it. 'Becker's the *zone*,' they say, or 'Becker zoning it'" (*The New York Times*). BACKGROUND: It appears that professional tennis players have given us a new sense of both the noun and the verb *zone*. Psychologists have another word for the phenomenon: *flow state*, as attested by another citation from the *Times*: "Mil Csikszentmihalyi, a psychologist at the University of Chicago, directed a research team that studied basketball players, chess players, surgeons, and others. . . . One element most always mentioned in this moment or moments of special absorption, which Csikszentmihalyi calls a *flow state*."





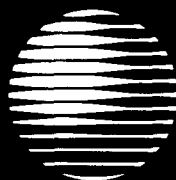
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